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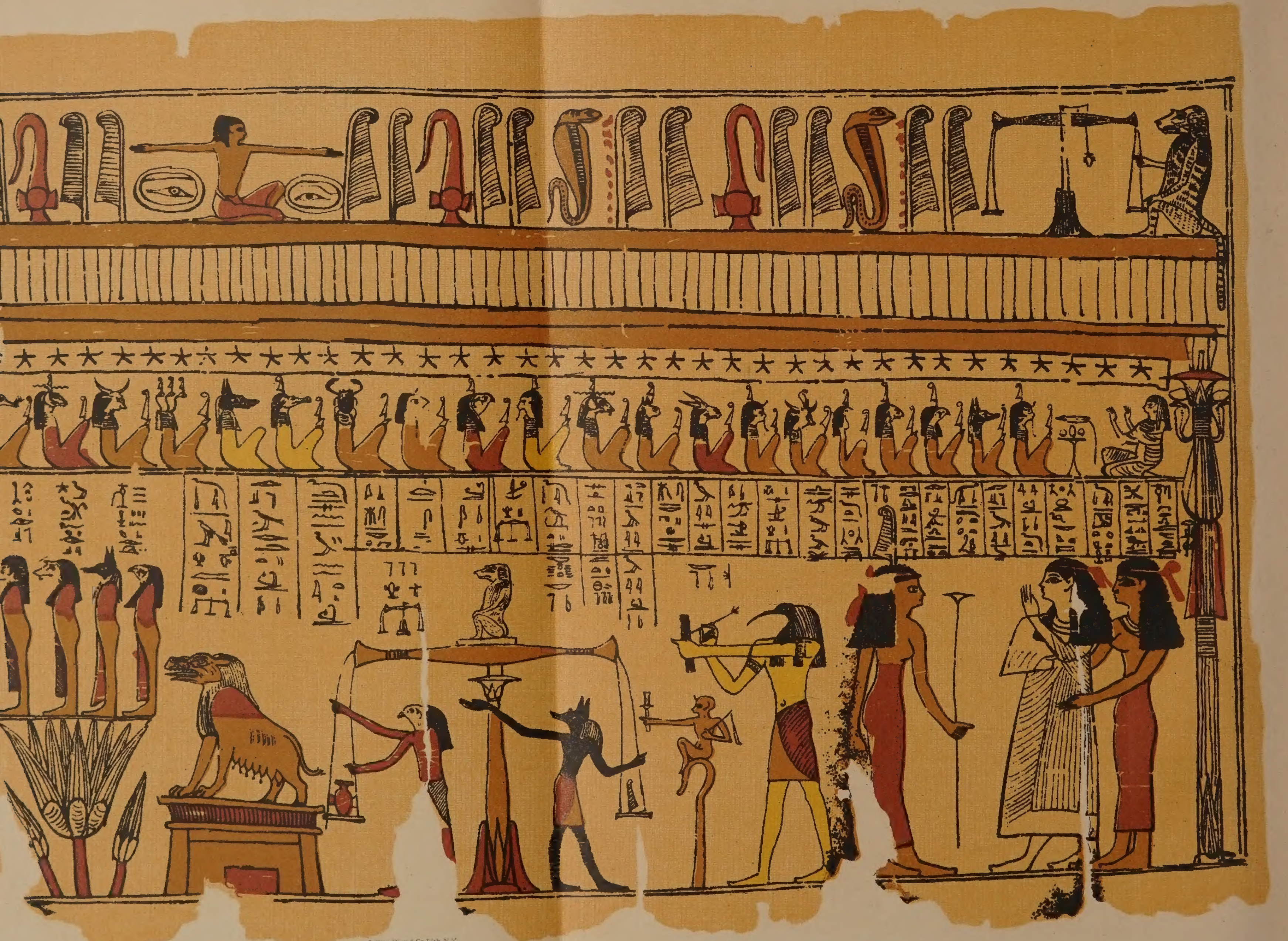

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THE BOOK OF THE DEAD.

Facsimile of a very ancient papyrus containing the Book of the Dead.

Found in Thebes. In the Royal Museum, Berlin.

The Book of the Dead was the chief monument of the religious literature of ancient Egypt. It was in 165 chapters; portions of which were inscribed on the mummy-cases and tombs, and are met with in the later Demotic Papyri. It constituted the funeral ritual of the Egyptians; describing, in mystical language, the adventures of the soul after death, and the texts and prayers it must repeat in order to escape the torments of the Egyptian Hades. The older portion, which dates back to the Old Empire, was of a practically moral character; the later and more mystical additions and glosses, coming down to the time of the Persians, substituted the doctrine of justification by faith in Osiris.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATE.

The judgment of the dead before the god Osiris, in the subterranean hall of justice. The scene is taken from the 125th chapter. Osiris, the judge of the nether world, is seated in a naos. On the opposite side, the deceased, led by Mā, the goddess of truth and justice, is introduced into the house resting on pillars. A pair of scales is erected in the middle; resting on one cup of which is a handled beaker, the symbol of the heart; on the opposite, the picture of truth, the pen. Horus and Anubis, sons of Osiris, are weighing and looking at the tongue of the scale; above which sits the Cynocephalus Hapi, as symbol of measure. In front of the scale, the ibis-headed Thoth, the scribe of the gods, is inditing the result of the weighing on a papyrus. Between him and Osiris a female hippopotamus, Amām, known as the Swallower, represents the accuser of the dead; whom Thoth defends, if he has led a just life. In the upper section of the hall, the deceased is addressing a prayer to the forty-two judges of the dead, who have a variety of heads, and each of whom carries the feather of truth and has to pass judgment concerning a special sin; regarding which the deceased declares himself innocent in the text.

EXTRACTS FROM PRAYERS AND PETITIONS IN THE BOOK OF THE DEAD.

"Do not imprison my soul. Do not let any hurt me. May I sit down among the principal gods in their dwellings. If you repel me from the places of regeneration, do not let the evil principles take hold of me. Do not let me be repelled from your gates; be not your gates closed against me. May I have loaves in Pu, drinks in tepu. Grant to me the funereal food and drinks, the oxen, the geese, the fabrics, the incense, the oil, and all the good and pure things upon which the gods live. May I be eternally settled in the transformations that will please me. May I be united with the gods of truth."

"I did not bid any one kill treacherously. I did not utter a lie to any man. I did not plunder the supplies in the temple. I did not overcharge. I did not tamper with the weight of the balance. I was not a bully. I did not use too many words in speaking. I did not turn a deaf ear to the words of truth. I did not make my mouth work. I did not steal. I was pure—pure—pure. I did not do what the gods hate. I did not cause the slave to be misused by his master. I did not cause any one to be hungry. I did not cause any one to weep. I did not commit adultery. I did not kill. I prevailed as a man who keeps his head."

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FORTY-FIVE VOLUMES

VOL. I.

NEW YORK
THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY
MDCCCXCVI

Imperial Edition

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PREFACE

THE plan of this Work is simple, and yet it is novel. In its distinctive features it differs from any compilation that has yet been made. Its main purpose is to present to American households a mass of good reading. But it goes much beyond this. For in selecting this reading it draws upon all literatures of all time and of every race, and thus becomes a conspectus of the thought and intellectual evolution of man from the beginning. Another and scarcely less important purpose is the interpretation of this literature in essays by scholars and authors competent to speak with authority.

The title, «A Library of the World's Best Literature,» is strictly descriptive. It means that what is offered to the reader is taken from the best authors, and is fairly representative of the best literature and of all literatures. It may be important historically, or because at one time it expressed the thought and feeling of a nation, or because it has the character of universality, or because the readers of to-day will find it instructive, entertaining, or amusing. The Work aims to suit a great variety of tastes, and thus to commend itself as a household companion for any mood and any hour. There is no intention of presenting merely a mass of historical material, however important it is in its place, which is commonly of the sort that people recommend others to read and do not read themselves. It is not a library of reference only, but a library to be read. The selections do not represent the partialities and prejudices and cultivation of any one person, or of a group of editors even; but, under the necessary editorial supervision, the sober judgment of almost as many minds as have assisted in the preparation of these volumes. By this method, breadth of appreciation has been sought.

The arrangement is not chronological, but alphabetical, under the names of the authors, and, in some cases, of literatures and special subjects. Thus, in each volume a certain variety is secured, the heaviness or sameness of a mass of antique, classical, or mediæval material is avoided, and the reader obtains a sense of the varieties and contrasts of different periods. But the work is not an encyclopædia, or merely a dictionary of authors. Comprehensive information as to all writers of importance may be included in a supplementary reference volume; but the attempt to quote from all would destroy the Work for reading purposes, and reduce it to a herbarium of specimens.

In order to present a view of the entire literary field, and to make these volumes especially useful to persons who have not access to large libraries, as well as to treat certain literatures or subjects when the names of writers are unknown or would have no significance to the reader, it has been found necessary to make groups of certain nationalities, periods, and special topics. For instance, if the reader would like to know something of ancient and remote literatures which cannot well be treated under the alphabetical list of authors, he will find special essays by competent scholars on the Accadian-Babylonian literature, on the Egyptian, the Hindu, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Icelandic, the Celtic, and others, followed by selections many of which have been specially translated for this Work. In these literatures names of ascertained authors are given in the Index. The intention of the essays is to acquaint the reader with the spirit, purpose, and tendency of these writings, in order that he may have a comparative view of the continuity of thought and the value of tradition in the world. Some subjects, like the Arthurian Legends, the Nibelungen Lied, the Holy Grail, Provençal Poetry, the Chansons and Romances, and the Gesta Romanorum, receive a similar treatment. Single poems upon which the authors' title to fame mainly rests, familiar and dear hymns, and occasional and modern verse of value, are also grouped together under an appropriate heading, with reference in the Index whenever the poet is known.

It will thus be evident to the reader that the Library is fairly comprehensive and representative, and that it has an educational value, while offering constant and varied entertainment. This comprehensive feature, which gives the Work distinction, is, however, supplemented by another of scarcely less importance; namely, the critical interpretive and biographical comments upon the authors and their writings and their place in literature, not by one mind, or by a small editorial staff, but by a great number of writers and scholars, specialists and literary critics, who are able to speak from knowledge and with authority. Thus the Library becomes in a way representative of the scholarship and wide judgment of our own time. But the essays have another value. They give information for the guidance of the reader. If he becomes interested in any selections here given, and would like a fuller knowledge of the author's works, he can turn to the essay and find brief observations and characterizations which will assist him in making his choice of books from a library.

The selections are made for household and general reading; in the belief that the best literature contains enough that is pure and elevating and at the same time readable, to satisfy any taste that should be encouraged. Of course selection implies choice and exclusion. It is hoped that what is given will be generally approved; yet it may well happen that some readers will miss the names of authors whom they desire to read. But this Work, like every other, has its necessary limits; and in a general compilation the classic writings, and those productions that the world has set its seal on as among the best, must predominate over contemporary literature that is still on its trial. It should be said, however, that many writers of present note and popularity are omitted simply for lack of space. The editors are compelled to keep constantly in view the wider field. The general purpose is to give only literature; and where authors are cited who are generally known as philosophers, theologians, publicists, or scientists, it is because they have distinct literary quality, or because their influence upon literature itself has been so profound that the progress of the race could not be accounted for without them.

These volumes contain not only or mainly the literature of the past, but they aim to give, within the limits imposed by such a view, an idea of contemporary achievement and tendencies in all civilized countries. In this view of the modern world the literary product of America and Great Britain occupies the largest space.

It should be said that the plan of this Work could not have been carried out without the assistance of specialists in many departments of learning, and of writers of skill and insight, both in this country and in Europe. This assistance has been most cordially given, with a full recognition of the value of the enterprise and of the aid that the Library may give in encouraging and broadening literary tastes. Perhaps no better service could be rendered the American public at this period than the offer of an opportunity for a comprehensive study of the older and the greater literatures of other nations. By this comparison it can gain a just view of its own literature, and of its possible mission in the world of letters.

Chas. Dudley Warner

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NOTE OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Owing to the many changes in the assignment of topics and engaging of writers incident to so extended a publication as the Library of the World's Best Literature, the Editor finds it impossible, before the completion of the work, adequately to recognize the very great aid which he has received from a large number of persons. A full list of contributors will be given in one of the concluding volumes. He will expressly acknowledge also his debt to those who have assisted him editorially, or in other special ways, in the preparation of these volumes.

Both Editor and Publishers have endeavored to give full credit to every author quoted, and to accompany every citation with ample notice of copyright ownership. At the close of the work it is their purpose to express in a more formal way their sense of obligation to the many publishers who have so courteously given permission for this use of their property, and whose rights of ownership it is intended thoroughly to protect.

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BOOKS are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.

JOHN MILTON.

CAXTON.

Reduced facsimile of the first page of the only copy extant of

GODEFREY OF BOLOYNE

or

LAST SIEGE AND CONQUESTE OF JHERUSALEM.

The Prologue, at top of page, begins:

Here begynneth the boke Intituled Eracles, and also Godefrey of Boloyne, the whiche speketh of the Conquest of the holy lande of Jherusalem.

Printed by Caxton, London, 1481. In the British Museum.

A good specimen page of the earliest English printing. Caxton's first printed book, and the first book printed in English, was "The Game and Play of the Chess," which was printed in 1474. The blank space on this page was for the insertion by hand of an illuminated initial T.

Here begynneth the boke Intituled Eracles, and alſo of Godefrey of Boloyne, the whiche ſpeketh of the Conqueſt of the holy londe of Jheruſalem, conteynyng diuerſe warres and noble faytes of Armes made in the ſame Royāme, and in the contrees adiacent And alſo many meruayllous werkes happed and fallen as wel on this ſyde, as in tho partyes this tyme duryng, And how the valyant duc Godefrey of Boloyne conquerd with the ſwerd the ſayd Royamme, And was kynge there,

The ffirſt chapitre treateth how Eracles conquerd Perſ; and ſlewe Coſdroe, and brought in to Jheruſalem the very croſſe, capitulo p̄mo,

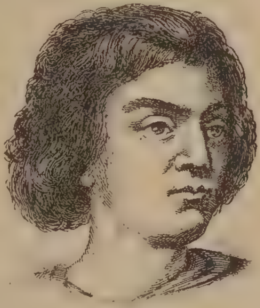
He Auncyent hyſtoryes ſaye that Eracles was a good cryſten man and gouernour of themppyre of Rome, But in his tyme Machomet had ben whiche was meſſager of the deuil And made the peple to vnderſtonde, that he was a prophete ſente from our lorde, In the tyme of Eracles was the fals lawe of machomet ſowen and ſprad abrode in many partyes of thoryent, and namely in Arabye, in ſo moche that the prynces of the londes yet wold not gyue faith to his ſecte that he prechid and taught whiche is curſed and euyl, but he conſtrayned them by force and by ſwerd to & alle their ſubgets to obeye to his commandemens, and to byleue in his lawe, Whan Eracles had conquerd Perſe and ſlayn coſdroe whiche was a puiſſaunt kynge he brought agayn to Jheruſalem the very Croſſe, whiche they had ladde in to perſe, And abode and dwellyd in the londe of Surrye, And dide do ordeyne and choſe a patriarke a moche wiſe man named Modeſte, By whos counſeil he dyde do make agayn the chirches, and habylled the holy places, and clenſed them that the tyraunt Coſdroe of Perſe had ſmeton doun and deſtroyed Eracles ſette grete entente & made grete coſtes for to repayre them, And whiles he entended therabout, homar the ſone of captap whiche was a prynce of Arabe the thirde after machomet, cam in to this contree named paleſtyne with ſo grete nombre of peple that alle the londe was couerd with them, and had thenne taken by force a moche ſtronge Cyte of that londe named Jadre, ffrom thens he drewe hym toward damaſke, and aſſieged

ABÉLARD

(1079—1142)

BY THOMAS DAVIDSON

Pierre, the eldest son of Bérenger and Lucie (Abélard?) was born at Palais, near Nantes and the frontier of Brittany, in 1079. His knightly father, having in his youth been a student, was anxious to give his family, and especially his favorite Pierre, a liberal education. The boy was accordingly sent to school, under a teacher who at that time was making his mark in the world,— Roscellin, the reputed father of Nominalism. As the whole import and tragedy of his life may be traced back to this man's teaching, and the relation which it bore to the thought of the time, we must pause to consider these.



Abélard

In the early centuries of our era, the two fundamental articles of the Gentile-Christian creed, the Trinity and the Incarnation, neither of them Jewish, were formulated in terms of Platonic philosophy, of which the distinctive tenet is, that the real and eternal is the universal, not the individual. On this assumption it was possible to say that the same real substance could exist in three, or indeed in any number of persons. In the case of God, the dogma-builders were careful to say, essence is one with existence, and therefore in Him the individuals are as real as the universal. Platonism, having lent the formula for the Trinity, became the favorite philosophy of many of the Church fathers, and so introduced into Christian thought and life the Platonic dualism, that sharp distinction between the temporal and the eternal which belittles the practical life and glorifies the contemplative.

This distinction, as aggravated by Neo-Platonism, further affected Eastern Christianity in the sixth century, and Western Christianity in the ninth, chiefly through the writings of (the pseudo-) Dionysius Areopagita, and gave rise to Christian mysticism. It was then erected into a rule of conduct through the efforts of Pope Gregory VII., who strove to subject practical and civil life entirely to the control of ecclesiastics and monks, standing for contemplative, supernatural life. The latter included all purely mental work, which more and more tended to concentrate itself upon religion and confine itself to the clergy. In this way it came to be considered an utter disgrace for any man engaged in mental work to take any part in the institutions of civil life, and particularly to marry. He might indeed enter into illicit relations, and rear a family of «nephews» and «nieces,» without losing prestige; but to marry was to commit suicide. Such was the condition of things in the days of Abélard.

But while Platonism, with its real universals, was celebrating its ascetic, unearthly triumphs in the West, Aristotelianism, which maintains that the individual is the real, was making its way in the East. Banished as heresy beyond the limits of the Catholic Church, in the fifth and sixth centuries, in the persons of Nestorius and others, it took refuge in Syria, where it flourished for many years in the schools of Edessa and Nisibis, the foremost of the time. From these it found its way among the Arabs, and even to the illiterate Muhammad, who gave it (1) theoretic theological expression in the cxii. surah of the Koran: «He is One God, God the Eternal; He neither begets nor is begotten; and to Him there is no peer,» in which both the fundamental dogmas of Christianity are denied, and that too on the ground of revelation; (2) practical expression, by forbidding asceticism and monasticism, and encouraging a robust, though somewhat coarse, natural life. Islâm, indeed, was an attempt to rehabilitate the human.

In Abélard's time Arab Aristotelianism, with its consequences for thought and life, was filtering into Europe and forcing Christian thinkers to defend the bases of their faith. Since these, so far as defensible at all, depended upon the Platonic doctrine of universals, and this could be maintained only by dialectic, this science became extremely popular,—indeed, almost the rage. Little of the real Aristotle was at that time known in the West; but in Porphyry's Introduction to Aristotle's Logic was a famous passage, in which all the difficulties with regard to universals were stated without being solved. Over this the intellectual battles of the first age of Scholasticism were fought. The more clerical and mystic thinkers, like Anselm and Bernard, of course sided with Plato; but the more worldly, robust thinkers inclined to accept Aristotle, not seeing that his doctrine is fatal to the Trinity.

Prominent among these was a Breton, Roscellin, the early instructor of Abélard. From him the brilliant, fearless boy learnt two terrible lessons: (1) that universals, instead of being real substances, external and superior to individual things, are mere names (hence Nominalism) for common qualities of things as recognized by the human mind; (2) that since universals are the tools and criteria of thought, the human mind, in which alone these exist, is the judge of all truth,—a lesson which leads directly to pure rationalism, and indeed to the rehabilitation of the human as against the superhuman. No wonder that Roscellin came into conflict with the church authorities, and had to flee to England. Abélard afterwards modified his nominalism and behaved somewhat unhandsomely to him, but never escaped from the influence of his teaching. Abélard was a rationalist and an asserter of the human. Accordingly, when, definitely adopting the vocation of the scholar, he went to Paris to study dialectic under the then famous William of Champeaux, a declared Platonist, or realist as the designation then was, he gave his teacher infinite trouble by his subtle objections, and not seldom got the better of him.

These victories, which made him disliked both by his teacher and his fellow-pupils, went to increase his natural self-appreciation, and induced him, though a mere youth, to leave William and set up a rival school at Mélun. Here his splendid personality, his confidence, and his brilliant powers of reasoning and statement, drew to him a large number of admiring pupils, so that he was soon induced to move his school to Corbeil, near Paris, where his impetuous dialectic found a wider field. Here he worked so hard that he fell ill, and was compelled to return home to his family. With them he remained for several years, devoting himself to study,—not only of dialectic, but plainly also of theology. Returning to Paris, he went to study rhetoric under his old enemy, William of Champeaux, who had meanwhile, to increase his prestige, taken holy orders, and had been made bishop of Châlons. The old feud was renewed, and Abélard, being now better armed than before, compelled his master openly to withdraw from his extreme realistic position with regard to universals, and assume one more nearly approaching that of Aristotle.

This victory greatly diminished the fame of William, and increased that of Abélard; so that when the former left his chair and appointed a successor, the latter gave way to Abélard and became his pupil (1113). This was too much for William, who removed his successor, and so forced Abélard to retire again to Mélun. Here he remained but a short time; for, William having on account of unpopularity removed his school from Paris Abélard returned thither and opened a school outside the city, on Mont Ste. Généviève. William, hearing this, returned to Paris and tried to put him down, but in vain. Abélard was completely victorious.

After a time he returned once more to Palais, to see his mother, who was about to enter the cloister, as his father had done some time before. When this visit was over, instead of returning to Paris to lecture on dialectic, he went to Laon to study theology under the then famous Anselm. Here, convinced of the showy superficiality of

Anselm, he once more got into difficulty, by undertaking to expound a chapter of Ezekiel without having studied it under any teacher. Though at first derided by his fellow-students, he succeeded so well as to draw a crowd of them to hear him, and so excited the envy of Anselm that the latter forbade him to teach in Laon. Abélard accordingly returned once more to Paris, convinced that he was fit to shine as a lecturer, not only on dialectic, but also on theology. And his audiences thought so also; for his lectures on Ezekiel were very popular and drew crowds. He was now at the height of his fame (1118).

The result of all these triumphs over dialecticians and theologians was unfortunate. He not only felt himself the intellectual superior of any living man, which he probably was, but he also began to look down upon the current thought of his time as obsolete and unworthy, and to set at naught even current opinion. He was now on the verge of forty, and his life had so far been one of spotless purity; but now, under the influence of vanity, this too gave way. Having no further conquests to make in the intellectual world, he began to consider whether, with his great personal beauty, manly bearing, and confident address, he might not make conquests in the social world, and arrived at the conclusion that no woman could reject him or refuse him her favor.

It was just at this unfortunate juncture that he went to live in the house of a certain Canon Fulbert, of the cathedral, whose brilliant «niece,» Héloïse, had at the age of seventeen just returned from a convent at Argenteuil, where she had been at school. Fulbert, who was proud of her talents, and glad to get the price of Abélard's board, took the latter into his house and intrusted him with the full care of Héloïse's further education, telling him even to chastise her if necessary. So complete was Fulbert's confidence in Abelard, that no restriction was put upon the companionship of teacher and pupil. The result was that Abélard and Héloïse, both equally inexperienced in matters of the heart, soon conceived for each other an overwhelming passion, comparable only to that of Faust and Gretchen. And the result in both cases was the same. Abélard, as a great scholar, could not think of marriage; and if he had, Héloïse would have refused to ruin his career by marrying him. So it came to pass that when their secret, never very carefully guarded, became no longer a secret, and threatened the safety of Héloïse, the only thing that her lover could do for her was to carry her off secretly to his home in Palais, and place her in charge of his sister. Here she remained until the birth of her child, which received the name of Astralabius, Abélard meanwhile continuing his work in Paris. And here all the nobility of his character comes out. Though Fulbert and his friends were, naturally enough, furious at what they regarded as his utter treachery, and though they tried to murder him, he protected himself, and as soon as Héloïse was fit to travel, hastened to Palais, and insisted upon removing her to Paris and making her his lawful wife. Héloïse used every argument which her fertile mind could suggest to dissuade him from a step which she felt must be his ruin, at the same time expressing her entire willingness to stand in a less honored relation to him. But Abélard was inexorable. Taking her to Paris, he procured the consent of her relatives to the marriage (which they agreed to keep secret), and even their presence at the ceremony, which was performed one morning before daybreak, after the two had spent a night of vigils in the church.

After the marriage, they parted and for some time saw little of each other. When Héloïse's relatives divulged the secret, and she was taxed with being Abélard's lawful wife, she «anathematized and swore that it was absolutely false.» As the facts were too patent, however, Abélard removed her from Paris, and placed her in the convent at Argenteuil, where she had been educated. Here she assumed the garb of a novice. Her relatives, thinking that he must have done this in order to rid himself of her, furiously vowed vengeance, which they took in the meanest and most brutal form of personal violence. It was not a time of fine sensibilities, justice, or mercy; but even the public of those days was horrified, and gave expression to its horror. Abélard, overwhelmed with shame, despair, and remorse, could now think of nothing better than to abandon the world. Without any vocation, as he well knew, he assumed the monkish habit and retired to the monastery of St. Denis, while Héloïse, by his order, took the veil at Argenteuil. Her devotion and heroism on this occasion Abélard has described in touching terms. Thus supernaturalism had done its worst for these two strong, impetuous human souls.

If Abélard had entered the cloister in the hope of finding peace, he soon discovered his mistake. The dissolute life of the monks utterly disgusted him, while the clergy stormed him with petitions to continue his lectures. Yielding to these, he was soon again surrounded by crowds of students — so great that the monks at St. Denis were glad to get rid of him. He accordingly retired to a lonely cell, to which he was followed by more admirers than could find shelter or food. As the schools of Paris were thereby emptied, his rivals did everything in their power to put a stop to his teaching, declaring that as a monk he ought not to teach profane science, nor as a layman in theology sacred science. In order to legitimatize his claim to teach the latter, he now wrote a theological treatise, regarding which he says: —

«It so happened that I first endeavored to illuminate the basis of our faith by similitudes drawn from human reason, and to compose for our students a treatise on ‘The Divine Unity and Trinity,’ because they kept asking for human and philosophic reasons, and demanding rather what could be understood than what could be said, declaring that the mere utterance of words was useless unless followed by understanding; that nothing could be believed that was not first understood, and that it was ridiculous for any one to preach what neither he nor those he taught could comprehend, God himself calling such people blind leaders of the blind.»

Here we have Abélard's central position, exactly the opposite to that of his realist contemporary, Anselm of Canterbury, whose principle was «Credo ut intelligam» (I believe, that I may understand). We must not suppose, however, that Abélard, with his rationalism, dreamed of undermining Christian dogma. Very far from it! He believed it to be rational, and thought he could prove it so. No wonder that the book gave offense, in an age when faith and ecstasy were placed above reason. Indeed, his rivals could have wished for nothing better than this book, which gave them a weapon to use against him. Led on by two old enemies, Alberich and Lotulf, they caused an ecclesiastical council to be called at Soissons, to pass judgment upon the book (1121). This judgment was a foregone conclusion, the trial being the merest farce, in which the pursuers were the judges, the Papal legate allowing his better reason to be overruled by their passion. Abélard was condemned to burn his book in public, and to read the Athanasian Creed as his confession of faith (which he did in tears), and then to be confined permanently in the monastery of St. Médard as a dangerous heretic.

His enemies seemed to have triumphed and to have silenced him forever. Soon after, however, the Papal legate, ashamed of the part he had taken in the transaction, restored him to liberty and allowed him to return to his own monastery at St. Denis. Here once more his rationalistic, critical spirit brought him into trouble with the bigoted, licentious monks. Having maintained, on the authority of Beda, that Dionysius, the patron saint of the monastery, was bishop of Corinth and not of Athens, he raised such a storm that he was forced to flee, and took refuge on a neighboring estate, whose proprietor, Count Thibauld, was friendly to him. Here he was cordially received by the monks of Troyes, and allowed to occupy a retreat belonging to them.

After some time, and with great difficulty, he obtained leave from the abbot of St. Denis to live where he chose, on condition of not joining any other order. Being now practically a free man, he retired to a lonely spot near Nogent-sur-Seine, on the banks of the Ardusson. There, having received a gift of a piece of land, he established himself along with a friendly cleric, building a small oratory of clay and reeds to the Holy Trinity. No sooner, however, was his place of retreat known than he was followed into the wilderness by hosts of students of all ranks, who lived in tents, slept on the ground, and underwent every kind of hardship, in order to listen to him (1123). These supplied his wants, and built a chapel, which he dedicated to the «Paraclete,»—a name at which his enemies, furious over his success, were greatly scandalized, but which ever after designated the whole establishment.

So incessant and unrelenting were the persecutions he suffered from those enemies, and so deep his indignation at their baseness, that for some time he seriously thought of escaping beyond the bounds of Christendom, and seeking refuge among the Muslim. But just then (1125) he was offered an important position, the abbotship of the monastery of St. Gildas-de-Rhuys, in Lower Brittany, on the lonely, inhospitable shore of the Atlantic. Eager for rest and a position promising influence, Abélard accepted the offer and left the Paraclete, not knowing what he was doing.

His position at St. Gildas was little less than slow martyrdom. The country was wild, the inhabitants were half barbarous, speaking a language unintelligible to him; the monks were violent, unruly, and dissolute, openly living with concubines; the lands of the monastery were subjected to intolerable burdens by the neighboring lord, leaving the monks in poverty and discontent. Instead of finding a home of God-fearing men, eager for enlightenment, he found a nest of greed and corruption. His attempts to introduce discipline, or even decency, among his «sons,» only stirred up rebellion and placed his life in danger. Many times he was menaced with the sword, many times with poison. In spite of all that, he clung to his office, and labored to do his duty. Meanwhile the jealous abbot of St. Denis succeeded in establishing a claim to the lands of the convent at Argenteuil,—of which Héloïse, long since famous not only for learning but also for saintliness, was now the head,—and she and her nuns were violently evicted and cast on the world. Hearing of this with indignation, Abélard at once offered the homeless sisters the deserted Paraclete and all its belongings. The offer was thankfully accepted, and Héloïse with her family removed there to spend the remainder of her life. It does not appear that Abélard and Héloïse ever saw each other at this time, although he used every means in his power to provide for her safety and comfort. This was in 1129. Two years later the Paraclete was confirmed to Héloïse by a Papal bull. It remained a convent, and a famous one, for over six hundred years.

After this Abélard paid several visits to the convent, which he justly regarded as his foundation, in order to arrange a rule of life for its inmates, and to encourage them in their vocation. Although on these occasions he saw nothing of Héloïse, he did not escape the malignant suspicions of the world, nor of his own flock, which now became more unruly than ever,—so much so that he was compelled to live outside the monastery. Excommunication was tried in vain, and even the efforts of a Papal legate failed to restore order. For Abélard there was nothing but «fear within and conflict without.» It was at this time, about 1132, that he wrote his famous 'Historia Calamitatum,' from which most of the above account of his life has been taken. In 1134, after nine years of painful struggle, he definitely left St. Gildas, without, however, resigning the abbotship. For the next two years he seems to have led a retired life, revising his old works and composing new ones.

Meanwhile, by some chance, his 'History of Calamities' fell into the hands of Héloïse at the Paraclete, was devoured with breathless interest, and rekindled the flame that seemed to have smoldered in her bosom for thirteen long years. Overcome with compassion for her husband, for such he really was, she at once wrote to him a letter which reveals the first healthy human heart-beat that had found expression in Christendom for a thousand years. Thus began a correspondence which, for genuine tragic pathos and human interest, has no equal in the world's literature. In Abélard, the scholarly monk has completely replaced the man; in Héloïse, the saintly nun is but a veil assumed in loving obedience to him, to conceal the deep-hearted, faithful, devoted flesh-and-blood woman. And such a woman! It may well be doubted if, for all that constitutes genuine womanhood, she ever had an equal. If there is salvation in love, Héloïse is in the heaven of heavens. She does not try to express her love in poems, as Mrs. Browning did; but her simple, straightforward expression of a love that would share Francesca's fate with her lover, rather than go to heaven without him, yields, and has yielded, matter for a hundred poems. She looks forward to no salvation; for her chief love is for him. *Domino specialiter, sua singulariter:* «As a member of the species woman I am the Lord's, as Héloïse I am yours»—nominalism with a vengeance!

But to return to Abélard. Permanent quiet in obscurity was plainly impossible for him; and so in 1136 we find him back at Ste. Généviève, lecturing to crowds of enthusiastic students. He probably thought that during the long years of his exile, the envy and hatred of his enemies had died out; but he soon discovered that he was greatly mistaken. He was too marked a character, and the tendency of his thought too dangerous, for that. Besides, he emptied the schools of his rivals, and adopted no conciliatory tone toward them. The natural result followed. In the year 1140, his enemies, headed by St. Bernard, who had long regarded him with suspicion, raised a cry of heresy against him, as subjecting everything to reason. Bernard, who was nothing if not a fanatic, and who managed to give vent to all his passions by placing them in the service of his God, at once denounced him to the Pope, to cardinals, and to bishops, in passionate letters, full of rhetoric, demanding his condemnation as a perverter of the bases of the faith.

At that time a great ecclesiastical council was about to assemble at Sens; and Abélard, feeling certain that his writings contained nothing which he could not show to be strictly orthodox, demanded that he should be allowed to explain and dialectically defend his position, in open dispute, before it. But this was above all things what his enemies dreaded. They felt that nothing was safe before his brilliant dialectic. Bernard even refused to enter the lists with him; and preferred to draw up a list of his heresies, in the form of sentences sundered from their context in his works,—some of them, indeed, from works which he never wrote,—and to call upon the council to condemn them. (These theses may be found in Denzinger's 'Enchiridion Symbolorum et Definitionum,' pp. 109 *seq.*) Abélard, clearly understanding the scheme, feeling its unfairness, and knowing the effect of Bernard's lachrymose pulpit rhetoric upon sympathetic ecclesiastics who believed in his power to work miracles, appeared before the council, only to appeal from its authority to Rome. The council, though somewhat disconcerted by this, proceeded to condemn the disputed theses, and sent a notice of its action to the Pope. Fearing that Abélard, who had friends in Rome, might proceed thither and obtain a reversal of the verdict, Bernard set every agency at work to obtain a confirmation of it before his victim could reach the Eternal City. And he succeeded.

The result was for a time kept secret from Abélard, who, now over sixty years old, set out on his painful journey. Stopping on his way at the famous, hospitable Abbey of Cluny, he was most kindly entertained by its noble abbot, who well deserved the name of Peter the Venerable. Here, apparently, he learned that he had been condemned and excommunicated; for he went no further. Peter offered the weary man an asylum in his house, which was gladly accepted; and Abélard, at last convinced of the vanity of all worldly ambition, settled down to a life of humiliation, meditation, study, and prayer. Soon afterward Bernard made advances toward reconciliation, which Abélard accepted; whereupon his excommunication was removed. Then the once proud Abélard, shattered in body and broken in spirit, had nothing more to do but to prepare for another life. And the end was not far off. He died at St. Marcel, on the 21st of April, 1142, at the age of sixty-three. His generous host, in a letter to Héloïse, gives a touching account of his closing days, which were mostly spent in a retreat provided for him on the banks of the Saône. There he read, wrote, dictated, and prayed, in the only quiet days which his life ever knew.

The body of Abélard was placed in a monolith coffin and buried in the chapel of the monastery of St. Marcel; but Peter the Venerable twenty-two years afterward allowed it to be secretly removed, and carried to the Paraclete, where Abélard had wished to lie. When Héloïse, world-famous for learning, virtue, and saintliness, passed away, and her body was laid beside his, he opened his arms and clasped her in close embrace. So says the legend, and who would not believe it? The united remains of the immortal lovers, after many vicissitudes, found at last (let us hope), in 1817, a permanent resting place, in the Parisian cemetery of Père Lachaise, having been placed together in Abélard's monolith coffin. «In death they were not divided.»

Abélard's character may be summed up in a few words. He was one of the most brilliant and variously gifted men that ever lived, a sincere lover of truth and champion of freedom. But unfortunately, his extraordinary personal beauty and charm of manner made him the object of so much attention and adulation that he soon became unable to live without seeing himself mirrored in the admiration and love of others. Hence his restlessness, irritability, craving for publicity, fondness for dialectic triumph, and inability to live in fruitful obscurity; hence, too, his intrigue with Héloïse, his continual struggles and disappointments, his final humiliation and tragic end. Not having conquered the world, he cannot claim the crown of the martyr.

Abélard's works were collected by Cousin, and published in three 4to volumes (Paris, 1836, 1849, 1859). They include, besides the correspondence with Héloïse, and a number of sermons, hymns, answers to questions, etc., written for her, the following:—(1) 'Sic et Non,' a collection of (often contradictory) statements of the Fathers concerning the chief dogmas of religion, (2) 'Dialectic,' (3) 'On Genera and Species,' (4) Glosses to Porphyry's 'Introduction,' Aristotle's 'Categories and Interpretation,' and Boethius's 'Topics,' (5) 'Introduction to Theology,' (6) 'Christian Theology,' (7) 'Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans,' (9) 'Abstract of Christian Theology,' (10) 'Ethics, or Know Thyself,' (11) 'Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian,' (12) 'On the Intellects,' (12) 'On the Hexameron,' with a few short and unimportant fragments and tracts. None of Abélard's numerous poems in the vernacular, in which he celebrated his love for Héloïse, which he sang ravishingly (for he was a famous singer), and which at once became widely popular, seem to have come down to us; but we have a somewhat lengthy poem, of considerable merit (though of doubtful authenticity), addressed to his son Astralabius, who grew to manhood, became a cleric, and died, it seems, as abbot of Hauterine in Switzerland, in 1162.

Of Abélard's philosophy, little need be added to what has been already said. It is, on the whole, the philosophy of the Middle Age, with this difference: that he insists upon making theology rational, and thus may truly be called the founder of modern rationalism, and the initiator of the struggle against the tyrannic authority of blind faith. To have been so is his crowning merit, and is one that can hardly be overestimated. At the same time it must be borne in mind that he was a loyal son of the Church, and never dreamed of opposing or undermining her. His greatest originality is in 'Ethics,' in which, by placing the essence of morality in the intent and not in the action, he anticipated Kant and much modern speculation. Here he did admirable work. Abélard founded no school, strictly speaking; nevertheless, he determined the method and aim of Scholasticism, and exercised a boundless influence, which is not dead. Descartes and Kant are his children. Among his immediate disciples were a pope, twenty-nine cardinals, and more than fifty bishops. His two greatest pupils were Peter the Lombard, bishop of Paris, and author of the 'Sentences,' the theological text-book of the schools for hundreds of years; and Arnold of Brescia, one of the noblest champions of human liberty, though condemned and banished by the second Council of the Lateran.

The best biography of Abélard is that by Charles de Rémusat (2 vols., 8vo, Paris, 1845). See also, in English, Wight's 'Abelard and Eloise' (New York, 1853).

Thomas Davidson

HÉLOÏSE TO ABÉLARD

A letter of yours sent to a friend, best beloved, to console him in affliction, was lately, almost by a chance, put into my hands. Seeing the superscription, guess how eagerly I seized it! I had lost the reality; I hoped to draw some comfort from this faint image of you. But alas!—for I well remember—every line was written with gall and wormwood.

How you retold our sorrowful history, and dwelt on your incessant afflictions! Well did you fulfill that promise to your friend, that, in comparison with your own, his misfortunes should seem but as trifles. You recalled the persecutions of your masters, the cruelty of my uncle, and the fierce hostility of your fellow-pupils, Albericus of Rheims, and Lotulphus of Lombardy — how through their plottings that glorious book your Theology was burned, and you confined and disgraced — you went on to the machinations of the Abbot of St. Denys and of your false brethren of the convent, and the calumnies of those wretches, Norbert and Bernard, who envy and hate you. It was even, you say, imputed to you as an offense to have given the name of Paraclete, contrary to the common practice, to the Oratory you had founded.

The persecutions of that cruel tyrant of St. Gildas, and of those execrable monks,— monks out of greed only, whom notwithstanding you call your children, — which still harass you, close the miserable history. Nobody could read or hear these things and not be moved to tears. What then must they mean to me?

We all despair of your life, and our trembling hearts dread to hear the tidings of your murder. For Christ's sake, who has thus far protected you,—write to us, as to His handmaids and yours, every circumstance of your present dangers. I and my sisters alone remain of all who were your friends. Let us be sharers of your joys and sorrows. Sympathy brings some relief, and a load laid on many shoulders is lighter. And write the more surely, if your letters may be messengers of joy. Whatever message they bring, at least they will show that you remember us. You can write to comfort your friend: while you soothe his wounds, you inflame mine. Heal, I pray you, those you yourself have made, you who bustle about to cure those for which you are not responsible. You cultivate a vineyard you did not plant, which grows nothing. Give heed to what you owe your own. You who spend so much on the obstinate, consider what you owe the obedient. You who lavish pains on your enemies, reflect on what you owe your daughters. And, counting nothing else, think how you are bound to me! What you owe to all devoted women, pay to her who is most devoted.

You know better than I how many treatises the holy fathers of the Church have written for our instruction; how they have labored to inform, to advise, and to console us. Is my ignorance to suggest knowledge to the learned Abélard? Long ago, indeed, your neglect astonished me. Neither religion, nor love of me, nor the example of the holy fathers, moved you to try to fix my struggling soul. Never, even when long grief had worn me down, did you come to see me, or send me one line of comfort,—me, to whom you were bound by marriage, and who clasp you about with a measureless love! And for the sake of this love have I no right to even a thought of yours?

You well know, dearest, how much I lost in losing you, and that the manner of it put me to double torture. You only can comfort me. By you I was wounded, and by you I must be healed. And it is only you on whom the debt rests. I have obeyed the last tittle of your commands; and if you bade me, I would sacrifice my soul.

To please you my love gave up the only thing in the universe it valued — the hope of your presence — and that forever. The instant I received your commands I quitted the habit of the world, and denied all the wishes of my nature. I meant to give up, for your sake, whatever I had once a right to call my own.

God knows it was always you, and you only that I thought of. I looked for no dowry, no alliance of marriage. And if the name of wife is holier and more exalted, the name of friend always remained sweeter to me, or if you would not be angry, a meaner title; since the more I gave up, the less should I injure your present renown, and the more deserve your love.

Nor had you yourself forgotten this in that letter which I recall. You are ready enough to set forth some of the reasons which I used to you, to persuade you not to fetter your freedom, but you pass over most of the pleas I made to withhold you from our ill-fated wedlock. I call God to witness that if Augustus, ruler of the world, should think me worthy the honor of marriage, and settle the whole globe on me to rule forever, it would seem dearer and prouder to me to be called your mistress than his empress.

Not because a man is rich or powerful is he better: riches and power may come from luck, constancy is from virtue. *I* hold that woman base who weds a rich man rather than a poor one, and takes a husband for her own gain. Whoever marries with such a motive—why, she will follow his prosperity rather than the man, and be willing to sell herself to a richer suitor.

That happiness which others imagine, best beloved, I experienced. Other women might think their husbands perfect, and be happy in the idea, but I knew that you were so and the universe knew the same. What philosopher, what king, could rival your fame? What village, city, kingdom, was not on fire to see you? When you appeared in public, who did not run to behold you? Wives and maidens alike recognized your beauty and grace. Queens envied Héloïse her Abélard.

Two gifts you had to lead captive the proudest soul, your voice that made all your teaching a delight, and your singing, which was like no other. Do you forget those tender songs you wrote for me, which all the world caught up and sang,—but not like you,—those songs that kept your name ever floating in the air, and made me known through many lands, the envy and the scorn of women?

What gifts of mind, what gifts of person glorified you! Oh, my loss! Who would change places with me now!

And *you* know, Abelard, that though I am the great cause of your misfortunes, I am most innocent. For a consequence is no part of a crime. Justice weighs not the thing done, but the intention. And how pure was my intention toward you, you alone can judge. Judge me! I will submit.

But how happens it, tell me, that since my profession of the life which you alone determined, I have been so neglected and so forgotten that you will neither see me nor write to me? Make me understand it, if you can, or I must tell you what everybody says: that it was not a pure love like mine that held your heart, and that your coarser feeling vanished with absence and ill-report. Would that to me alone this seemed so, best beloved, and not to all the world! Would that I could hear others excuse you, or devise excuses myself!

The things I ask ought to seem very small and easy to you. While I starve for you, do, now and then, by words, bring back your presence to me! How can you be generous in deeds if you are so avaricious in words? I have done everything for your sake. It was not religion that dragged me, a young girl, so fond of life, so ardent, to the harshness of the convent, but only your command. If I deserve nothing from you, how vain is my labor! God will not recompense me, for whose love I have done nothing.

When you resolved to take the vows, I followed,—rather, I ran before. You had the image of Lot's wife before your eyes; you feared I might look back, and therefore you deeded *me* to God by the sacred vestments and irrevocable vows before you took them yourself. For this, I own, I grieved, bitterly ashamed that I could depend on you so little, when I would lead or follow you straight to perdition. For my soul is always with you and no longer mine own. And if it is not with you in these last wretched years, it is nowhere. Do receive it kindly. Oh, if only you had returned favor for favor, even a little for the much, words for things! Would, beloved, that your affection would not take my tenderness and obedience always for granted; that it might be more anxious! But just because I have poured out all I have and am, you give me nothing. Remember, oh, remember how much you owe!

There was a time when people doubted whether I had given you all my heart, asking nothing. But the end shows how I began. I have denied myself a life which promised at least peace and work in the world, only to obey your hard exactions. I have kept back nothing for myself, except the comfort of pleasing you. How hard and cruel are you then, when I ask so little and that little is so easy for you to give!

In the name of God, to whom you are dedicate, send me some lines of consolation. Help me to learn obedience! When you wooed me because earthly love was beautiful, you sent me letter after letter. With your divine singing every street and house echoed my name! How much more ought you now to persuade to God her whom then you turned from Him! Heed what I ask; think what you owe. I have written a long letter, but the ending shall be short. Farewell, darling!

ABÉLARD'S ANSWER TO HÉLOÏSE

To Héloïse, his best beloved Sister in Christ,
Abélard, her Brother in Him:

If, since we resigned the world I have not written to you, it was because of the high opinion I have ever entertained of your wisdom and prudence. How could I think that she stood in need of help on whom Heaven had showered its best gifts? You were able, I knew, by example as by word, to instruct the ignorant, to comfort the timid, to kindle the lukewarm.

When prioress of Argenteuil, you practiced all these duties; and if you give the same attention to your daughters that you then gave to your sisters, it is enough. All my exhortations would be needless. But if, in your humility, you think otherwise, and if my words can avail you anything, tell me on what subjects you would have me write, and as God shall direct me I will instruct you. I thank God that the constant dangers to which I am exposed rouse your sympathies. Thus I may hope, under the divine protection of your prayers, to see Satan bruised under my feet.

Therefore I hasten to send you the form of prayer you beseech of me—you, my sister, once dear to me in the world, but now far dearer in Christ. Offer to God a constant sacrifice of prayer. Urge him to pardon our great and manifold sins, and to avert the dangers which threaten me. We know how powerful before God and his saints are the prayers of the faithful, but chiefly of faithful women for their friends, and of wives for their husbands. The Apostle admonishes us to pray without ceasing. . . . But I will not insist on the supplications of your sisterhood, day and night devoted to the service of their Maker; to you only do I turn. I well know how powerful your intercession may be. I pray you, exert it in this my need. In your prayers, then, ever remember him who, in a special sense, is yours. Urge your entreaties, for it is just that you should be heard. An equitable judge cannot refuse it.

In former days, you remember, best beloved, how fervently you recommended me to the care of Providence. Often in the day you uttered a special petition. Removed now from the Paraclete, and surrounded by perils, how much greater my need! Convince me of the sincerity of your regard, I entreat, I implore you.

[The Prayer:] "O God, who by Thy servant didst here assemble Thy handmaids in Thy Holy Name, grant, we beseech Thee, that he be protected from all adversity, and be restored safe to us, Thy handmaids."

If Heaven permit my enemies to destroy me, or if I perish by accident, see that my body is conveyed to the Paraclete. There, my daughters, or rather my sisters in Christ, seeing my tomb, will not cease to implore Heaven for me. No resting-place is so safe for the grieving soul, forsaken in the wilderness of its sins, none so full of hope as that which is dedicated to the Paraclete—that is, the Comforter.

Where could a Christian find a more peaceful grave than in the society of holy women, consecrated by God? They, as the Gospel tells us, would not leave their divine Master; they embalmed His body with precious spices; they followed Him to the tomb, and there they held their vigil. In return, it was to them that the angel of the resurrection appeared for their consolation.

Finally, let me entreat you that the solicitude you now too strongly feel for my life you will extend to the repose of my soul. Carry into my grave the love you showed me when alive; that is, never forget to pray Heaven for me.

Long life, farewell! Long life, farewell, to your sisters also! Remember me, but let it be in Christ!

Translated for the ‹World's Best Literature.›

THE VESPER HYMN OF ABÉLARD

OH, WHAT shall be, oh, when shall be that holy Sabbath day,
Which heavenly care shall ever keep and celebrate alway,
When rest is found for weary limbs, when labor hath reward,
When everything forevermore is joyful in the Lord?

The true Jerusalem above, the holy town, is there,
Whose duties are so full of joy, whose joy so free from care;
Where disappointment cometh not to check the longing heart,
And where the heart, in ecstasy, hath gained her better part.

O glorious King, O happy state, O palace of the blest!
O sacred place and holy joy, and perfect, heavenly rest!
To thee aspire thy citizens in glory's bright array,
And what they feel and what they know they strive in vain to say.

For while we wait and long for home, it shall be ours to raise
Our songs and chants and vows and prayers in that dear country's praise;
And from these Babylonian streams to lift our weary eyes,
And view the city that we love descending from the skies.

There, there, secure from every ill, in freedom we shall sing
The songs of Zion, hindered here by days of suffering,
And unto Thee, our gracious Lord, our praises shall confess
That all our sorrow hath been good, and Thou by pain canst bless.

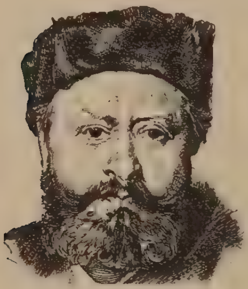
There Sabbath day to Sabbath day sheds on a ceaseless light,
Eternal pleasure of the saints who keep that Sabbath bright;
Nor shall the chant ineffable decline, nor ever cease,
Which we with all the angels sing in that sweet realm of peace.

Translation of Dr. Samuel W. Duffield.

EDMOND ABOUT

(1828–1885)

EARLY in the reign of Louis Napoleon, a serial story called ‘Tolla,’ a vivid study of social life in Rome, delighted the readers of the Revue des Deux Mondes. When published in book form in 1855 it drew a storm of opprobrium upon its young author, who was accused of offering as his own creation a translation of the Italian work ‘Vittoria Savorelli.’ This charge, undoubtedly unjust, he indignantly refuted. It served at least to make his name well known. Another book, ‘La Question Romaine,’ a brilliant if somewhat superficial argument against the temporal power of pope and priests, was a philosophic employment of the same material. Appearing in 1860, about the epoch of the French invasion of Austrian Italy, its tone agreed with popular sentiment and it was favorably received.



Edmond About

Edmond François Valentin About had a freakish, evasive, many-sided personality, a nature drawn in too many directions to achieve in any one of these the success his talents warranted. He was born in Dreuze, and like most French boys of literary ambition, soon found his way to Paris, where he studied at the Lycée Charlemagne. Here he won the honor prize; and in 1851 was sent to Athens to study archæology at the École Française. He loved change and out-of-the-way experiences, and two studies resulted from this trip: ‘La Grèce Contemporaine,’ a book of charming philosophic description; and the delightful story ‘Le Roi des Montagnes’ (The King of the Mountains). This tale of the long-limbed German student, enveloped in the smoke from his porcelain pipe as he recounts a series of impossible adventures, — those of himself and two Englishwomen, captured for ransom by Hadgi Stavros, brigand king in the Grecian mountains, —is especially characteristic of About in the humorous atmosphere of every situation.

About wrote stories so easily and well that his early desertion of fiction is surprising. His mocking spirit has often suggested comparison with Voltaire, whom he studied and admired. He too is a skeptic and an idol-breaker; but his is a kindlier irony, a less incisive philosophy. Perhaps, however, this influence led to lack of faith in his own work, to his loss of an ideal, which Zola thinks the real secret of his sudden change from novelist to journalist. Voltaire taught him to scoff and disbelieve, to demand « à quoi bon ? » and that took the heart out of him. He was rather fond of exposing abuses, a habit that appears in those witty letters to the Gaulois which in 1878 obliged him to suspend that journal. His was a positive mind, interested in political affairs, and with something always ready to say upon them. In 1872 he founded a radical newspaper, Le XIXme Siècle (The Nineteenth Century), in association with another aggressive spirit, that of Francisque Sarcey. For many years he proved his ability as editor, business man, and keen polemist.

He tried drama, too, inevitable ambition of young French authors; but after the failure of ‘Guillery’ at the Théâtre Française and ‘Gaétena’ at the Odéon, renounced the theatre. Indeed, his power is in odd conceptions, in the covert laugh and humorous suggestion of the phrasing, rather than in plot or characterization. He will always be best known for the tales and novels in that thoroughly French style — clear, concise, and witty — which in 1878 elected him president of the Société des Gens de Lettres, and in 1884 won him a seat in the Academy.

About wrote a number of novels, most of them as well known in translation to English and American readers as to his French audience. The bright stories originally published in the Moniteur, afterward collected with the title ‘Les Mariages de Paris,’ had a conspicuous success, and were followed by a companion volume, ‘Les Mariages de Province.’ ‘L'Homme à l'Oreille Cassée’ (The Man with the Broken Ear) — the story of a mummy resuscitated to a world of new conditions after many years of apparent death — shows his freakish delight in oddity. So does ‘Le Nez du Notaire’ (The Notary's Nose), a gruesome tale of the tribulations of a handsome society man, whose nose is struck off in a duel by a revengeful Turk. The victim buys a bit of living skin from a poor water-carrier, and obtains a new nose by successful grafting. But he can nevermore get rid of the uncongenial Aquarius, who exercises occult influence over the skin with which he has parted. When he drinks too much, the Notary's nose is red; when he starves, it dwindles away; when he loses the arm from which the graft was made, the important feature drops off altogether, and the sufferer must needs buy a silver one. About's latest novel, ‘Le Roman d'un Brave Homme’ (The Story of an Honest Man), is in quite another vein, a charming picture of bourgeois virtue in revolutionary days. ‘Madelon’ and ‘La Vielle Roche’ (The Old School) are also popular.

French critics have not found much to say of this non-evolutionist of letters, who is neither pure realist nor pure romanticist, and who has no new theory of art. Some, indeed, may have scorned him for the wise taste which refuses to tread the debatable ground common to French fiction. But the reading public has received him with less conscious analysis, and has delighted in him. If he sees only what any clever man may see, and is no profound psychologist, yet he tells what he sees and what he imagines with delightful spirit and delightful wit, and tinges the fabric of his fancy with the ever-changing colors of his own versatile personality, fanciful suggestions, homely realism, and bright antithesis. Above all, he has the great gift of the story-teller.

THE CAPTURE

From ‹The King of the Mountains›

«St! St!»

I raised my eyes. Two thickets of mastic-trees and arbutus inclosed the road on the right and left. From each tuft of trees protruded three or four musket-barrels. A voice cried out in Greek, «Seat yourselves on the ground!» This operation was the more easy to me, as my legs gave way under me. But I consoled myself by thinking that Ajax, Agamemnon, and the fiery Achilles, if they had found themselves in the same situation, would not have refused the seat that was offered.

The musket-barrels were leveled upon us. It seemed to me that they stretched out immeasurably, and that their muzzles were about to join above our heads. It was not that fear disturbed my vision; but I had never remarked so sensibly the desperate length of the Greek muskets! The whole arsenal soon debouched into the road, and every barrel showed its stock and its master.

The only difference which exists between devils and brigands is, that devils are less black than they are said to be, and brigands more dirty than people suppose. The eight bullies, who packed themselves in a circle around us, were so filthy in appearance that I should have wished to give them my money with a pair of tongs. You might guess, with a little effort, that their caps had been red; but lye-wash itself could not have restored the original color of their clothes. All the rocks of the kingdom had stained their cotton shirts, and their vests preserved a sample of the different soils on which they had reposed. Their hands, their faces, and even their moustachios were of a reddish-gray, like the soil which supports them. Every animal is colored according to its abode and its habits: the foxes of Greenland are of the color of snow;

lions, of the desert; partridges, of the furrow; Greek brigands, of the highway.

The chief of the little troop which had made us prisoners was distinguished by no outward mark. Perhaps, however, his face, his hands, and his clothes were richer in dust than those of his comrades. He leaned toward us from the height of his tall figure, and examined us so closely that I felt the grazing of his moustachios. You would have pronounced him a tiger, who smells of his prey before tasting it. When his curiosity was satisfied, he said to Dimitri, « Empty your pockets! »

Dimitri did not give him cause to repeat the order: he threw down before him a knife, a tobacco-pouch, and three Mexican dollars, which compose a sum of about sixteen francs.

« Is that all? » demanded the brigand.

« Yes, brother. »

« You are the servant? »

« Yes, brother. »

« Take back one dollar. You must not return to the city without money. »

Dimitri haggled. « You could well allow me two, » said he: « I have two horses below; they are hired from the riding-school; I shall have to pay for the day. »

« You will explain to Zimmerman that we have taken your money from you. »

« And if he wishes to be paid, notwithstanding? »

« Answer that he is lucky enough to see his horses again. »

« He knows very well that you do not take horses. What would you do with them in the mountains? »

« Enough! What is this big raw-boned animal next you? »

I answered for myself: « An honest German, whose spoils will not enrich you. »

« You speak Greek well. Empty your pockets. »

I deposited on the road a score of francs, my tobacco, my pipe, and my handkerchief.

« What is that? » asked the grand inquisitor.

« A handkerchief. »

« For what purpose? »

« To wipe my nose. »

« Why did you tell me that you were poor? It is only milords who wipe their noses with handkerchiefs. Take off the box which you have behind your back. Good! Open it! »

My box contained some plants, a book, a knife, a little package of arsenic, a gourd nearly empty, and the remnants of my breakfast, which kindled a look of covetousness in the eyes of Mrs. Simons. I had the assurance to offer them to her before my baggage changed masters. She accepted greedily, and began to devour the bread and meat. To my great astonishment, this act of gluttony scandalized our robbers, who murmured among themselves the word «Schismatic!» The monk made half a dozen signs of the cross, according to the rite of the Greek Church.

«You must have a watch,» said the brigand: «put it with the rest.»

I gave up my silver watch, a hereditary toy of the weight of four ounces. The villains passed it from hand to hand, and thought it very beautiful. I was in hopes that admiration, which makes men better, would dispose them to restore me something, and I begged their chief to let me have my tin box. He imposed silence upon me roughly. «At least,» said I, «give me back two crowns for my return to the city!» He answered with a sardonic smile, «You will not have need of them.»

The turn of Mrs. Simons had come. Before putting her hand in her pocket, she warned our conquerors in the language of her fathers. The English is one of those rare idioms which one can speak with a mouth full. «Reflect well on what you are going to do,» said she, in a menacing tone. «I am an Englishwoman, and English subjects are inviolable in all the countries of the world. What you will take from me will serve you little, and will cost you dear. England will avenge me, and you will all be hanged, to say the least. Now if you wish my money, you have only to speak; but it will burn your fingers: it is English money!»

«What does she say?» asked the spokesman of the brigands.

Dimitri answered, «She says that she is English.»

«So much the better! All the English are rich. Tell her to do as you have done.»

The poor lady emptied on the sand a purse, which contained twelve sovereigns. As her watch was not in sight, and as they made no show of searching us, she kept it. The clemency of the conquerors left her her pocket-handkerchief.

Mary Ann threw down her watch, with a whole bunch of charms against the evil eye. She cast before her, by a movement full of mute grace, a shagreen bag, which she carried in her belt. The brigand opened it with the eagerness of a custom-house officer. He drew from it a little English dressing-case, a vial of English salts, a box of pastilles of English mint, and a hundred and some odd francs in English money.

« Now, » said the impatient beauty, « you can let us go: we have nothing more for you. » They indicated to her, by a menacing gesture, that the session was not ended. The chief of the band squatted down before our spoils, called « the good old man, » counted the money in his presence, and delivered to him the sum of forty-five francs. Mrs. Simons nudged me on the elbow. « You see, » said she, « the monk and Dimitri have betrayed us: he is dividing the spoils with them. »

« No, madam, » replied I, immediately. « Dimitri has received a mere pittance from that which they had stolen from him. It is a thing which is done everywhere. On the banks of the Rhine, when a traveler is ruined at roulette, the conductor of the game gives him something wherewith to return home. »

« But the monk ? »

« He has received a tenth part of the booty in virtue of an immemorial custom. Do not reproach him, but rather be thankful to him for having wished to save us, when his convent was interested in our capture. »

This discussion was interrupted by the farewells of Dimitri. They had just set him at liberty.

« Wait for me, » said I to him: « we will return together. » He shook his head sadly, and answered me in English, so as to be understood by the ladies: —

« You are prisoners for some days, and you will not see Athens again before paying a ransom. I am going to inform the milord. Have these ladies any messages to give me for him ? »

« Tell him, » cried Mrs. Simons, « to run to the embassy, to go then to the Piræus and find the admiral, to complain at the foreign office, to write to Lord Palmerston! They shall take us away from here by force of arms, or by public authority, but I do not intend that they shall disburse a penny for my liberty. »

« As for me, » replied I, without so much passion, « I beg you to tell my friends in what hands you have left me. If some hundreds of drachms are necessary to ransom a poor devil of a naturalist, they will find them without trouble. These gentlemen of the highway cannot rate me very high. I have a mind, while you are still here, to ask them what I am worth at the lowest price. »

"It would be useless, my dear Mr. Hermann! It is not they who fix the figures of your ransom."

"And who then?"

"Their chief, Hadgi-Stavros."

HADGI-STAVROS

From 'The King of the Mountains'

The camp of the King was a plateau, covering a surface of seven or eight hundred metres. I looked in vain for the tents of our conquerors. The brigands are not sybarites, and they sleep under the open sky on the 30th of April. I saw neither spoils heaped up nor treasures displayed, nor any of those things which one expects to find at the headquarters of a band of robbers. Hadgi-Stavros makes it his business to have the booty sold; every man receives his pay in money, and employs it as he chooses. Some make investments in commerce, others take mortgages on houses in Athens, others buy land in their villages; no one squanders the products of robbery. Our arrival interrupted the breakfast of twenty-five or thirty men, who flocked around us with their bread and cheese. The chief supports his soldiers; there is distributed to them every day one ration of bread, oil, wine, cheese, caviare, allspice, bitter olives, and meat when their religion permits it. The epicures who wish to eat mallows or other herbs are at liberty to gather delicacies in the mountains.

The office of the King was as much like an office as the camp of the robbers was like a camp. Neither tables nor chairs nor movables of any sort were to be seen there. Hadgi-Stavros was seated cross-legged on a square carpet in the shade of a fir-tree. Four secretaries and two servants were grouped around him. A boy of sixteen or eighteen was occupied incessantly in filling, lighting, and cleaning the chibouk of his master. He carried in his belt a tobacco-pouch, embroidered with gold and fine mother-of-pearl, and a pair of silver pincers intended for taking up coals. Another servant passed the day in preparing cups of coffee, glasses of water, and sweetmeats to refresh the royal mouth. The secretaries, seated on the bare rock, wrote on their knees, with pens made of reeds. Each of them had at hand a long copper box containing reeds, penknife, and inkhorn. Some tin cylinders, like those in which our soldiers roll up their discharges, served as a depository for the archives. The paper was not of native manufacture, and for a good reason. Every leaf bore the word BATH in capital letters.

The King was a fine old man, marvelously well preserved, straight, slim, supple as a spring, spruce and shining as a new sabre. His long white moustachios hung under his chin like two marble stalactites. The rest of his face was carefully shaved, the skull bare even to the occiput, where a long tress of white hair was rolled up under his hat. The expression of his features appeared to me calm and thoughtful. A pair of small, clear blue eyes and a square chin announced an indomitable will. His face was long, and the position of the wrinkles lengthened it still more. All the creases of the forehead were broken in the middle, and seemed to direct themselves toward the meeting of the eyebrows; two wide and deep furrows descended perpendicularly to the corners of the lips, as if the weight of the moustachios had drawn in the muscles of the face.

I have seen a good many septuagenarians; I have even dissected one who would have reached a hundred years, if the diligence of Osnabrück had not passed over his body: but I do not remember to have observed a more green and robust old age than that of Hadgi-Stavros. He wore the dress of Tino and of all the islands of the Archipelago. His red cap formed a large crease at its base around his forehead. He had a vest of black cloth, faced with black silk, immense blue pantaloons which contained more than twenty metres of cotton cloth, and great boots of Russia leather, elastic and stout. The only rich thing in his costume was a scarf embroidered with gold and precious stones, which might be worth two or three thousand francs. It inclosed in its folds an embroidered cashmere purse, a Damascus sanjar in a silver sheath, a long pistol mounted in gold and rubies, and the appropriate baton.

Quietly seated in the midst of his employees, Hadgi-Stavros moved only the ends of his fingers and his lips; the lips to dictate his correspondence, the fingers to count the beads in his chaplet. It was one of those beautiful chaplets of milky amber which do not serve to number prayers, but to amuse the solemn idleness of the Turk.

He raised his head at our approach, guessed at a glance the occurrence which had brought us there, and said to us, with a gravity which had in it nothing ironical, «You are welcome! Be seated.»

«Sir,» cried Mrs. Simons, «I am an Englishwoman, and—» He interrupted the discourse by making his tongue smack against the teeth of his upper jaw—superb teeth, indeed! «Presently,» said he: «I am occupied.» He understood only Greek, and Mrs. Simons knew only English; but the physiognomy of the King was so speaking that the good lady comprehended easily without the aid of an interpreter.

Selections from ‹The King of the Mountains› used by permission of J. E. Tilton and Company

THE VICTIM

From ‹The Man with the Broken Ear›

Léon took his bunch of keys and opened the long oak box on which he had been seated. The lid being raised, they saw a great leaden casket which inclosed a magnificent walnut box carefully polished on the outside, lined on the inside with white silk, and padded.

The others brought their lamps and candles near, and the colonel of the Twenty-third of the line appeared as if he were in a chapel illuminated for his lying in state.

One would have said that the man was asleep. The perfect preservation of the body attested the paternal care of the murderer. It was truly a remarkable preparation, and would have borne comparison with the finest European mummies described by Vicq d'Azyr in 1779, and by the younger Puymaurin in 1787. The part best preserved, as is always the case, was the face. All the features had maintained a proud and manly expression. If any old friend of the colonel had been at the opening of the third box, he would have recognized him at first sight. Undoubtedly the point of the nose was a little sharper, the nostrils less expanded and thinner, and the bridge a little more marked, than in the year 1813. The eyelids were thinned, the lips pinched, the corners of the mouth drawn down, the cheek bones too prominent, and the neck visibly shrunken, which exaggerated the prominence of the chin and larynx. But the eyelids were closed without contraction, and the sockets much less hollow than one could have expected; the mouth was not at all distorted, like the mouth of a corpse; the skin was slightly wrinkled, but had not changed color,—it had only become a little more transparent, showing after a fashion the color of the tendons, the fat, and the muscles, wherever it rested directly upon them. It also had a rosy tint which is not ordinarily seen in embalmed corpses. Dr. Martout explained this anomaly by saying that if the colonel had actually been dried alive, the globules of the blood were not decomposed, but simply collected in the capillary vessels of the skin and subjacent tissues, where they still preserved their proper color, and could be seen more easily than otherwise on account of the semi-transparency of the skin.

The uniform had become much too large, as may be readily understood, though it did not seem at a casual glance that the members had become deformed. The hands were dry and angular, but the nails, although a little bent inward toward the root, had preserved all their freshness. The only very noticeable change was the excessive depression of the abdominal walls, which seemed crowded downward to the posterior side; at the right, a slight elevation indicated the place of the liver. A tap of the finger on the various parts of the body produced a sound like that from dry leather. While Léon was pointing out these details to his audience and doing the honors of his mummy, he awkwardly broke off the lower part of the right ear, and a little piece of the colonel remained in his hand. This trifling accident might have passed unnoticed had not Clémentine, who followed with visible emotion all the movements of her lover, dropped her candle and uttered a cry of affright. All gathered around her. Léon took her in his arms and carried her to a chair. M. Renault ran after salts. She was as pale as death, and seemed on the point of fainting. She soon recovered, however, and reassured them all by a charming smile.

«Pardon me,» she said, «for such a ridiculous exhibition of terror; but what Monsieur Léon was saying to us—and then—that figure which seemed sleeping—it appeared to me that the poor man was going to open his mouth and cry out, when he was injured.»

Léon hastened to close the walnut box, while M. Martout picked up the piece of ear and put it in his pocket. But Clémentine, while continuing to smile and make apologies, was overcome by a fresh access of emotion and melted into tears. The engineer threw himself at her feet, poured forth excuses and tender phrases, and did all he could to console her inexplicable grief.

Clémentine dried her eyes, looked prettier than ever, and sighed fit to break her heart, without knowing why.

« Beast that I am! » muttered Léon, tearing his hair. « On the day when I see her again after three years' absence, I can think of nothing more soul-inspiring than showing her mummies! » He launched a kick at the triple coffin of the colonel, saying, « I wish the devil had the confounded colonel! »

« No! » cried Clémentine, with redoubled energy and emotion. « Do not curse him, Monsieur Léon! He has suffered so much! Ah! poor, poor, unfortunate man! »

Mlle. Sambucco felt a little ashamed. She made excuses for her niece, and declared that never, since her tenderest childhood, had she manifested such extreme sensitiveness. . . . Clémentine was no sensitive plant. She was not even a romantic schoolgirl. Her youth had not been nourished by Anne Radcliffe, she did not trouble herself about ghosts, and she would go through the house very tranquilly at ten o'clock at night without a candle. When her mother died, some months before Léon's departure, she did not wish to have any one share with her the sad satisfaction of watching and praying in the death chamber.

« This will teach us, » said the aunt, « what staying up after ten o'clock does. What! it is midnight, within a quarter of an hour! Come, my child; you will recover fast enough after you get to bed. »

Clémentine arose submissively; but at the moment of leaving the laboratory she retraced her steps, and with a caprice more inexplicable than her grief, she absolutely demanded to see the mummy of the colonel again. Her aunt scolded in vain; in spite of the remarks of Mlle. Sambucco and all the others present, she reopened the walnut box, knelt down beside the mummy, and kissed it on the forehead.

« Poor man! » said she, rising. « How cold he is! Monsieur Léon, promise me that if he is dead you will have him laid in consecrated ground! »

« As you please, mademoiselle. I intended to send him to the anthropological museum, with my father's permission; but you know that we can refuse you nothing. »

Selections from ‹The Man with the Broken Ear› used by permission of Henry Holt and Company

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

From ‹The Man with the Broken Ear›

FORTHWITH the colonel marched and opened the windows with a precipitation which upset the gazers among the crowd.

«People,» said he, «I have knocked down a hundred beggarly pandours, who respect neither sex nor infirmity. For the benefit of those who are not satisfied, I will state that I call myself Colonel Fougas of the Twenty-third. And *Vive l'Empéreur!*»

A confused mixture of plaudits, cries, laughs, and jeers answered this unprecedented allocution. Léon Renault hastened out to make apologies to all to whom they were due. He invited a few friends to dine the same evening with the terrible colonel, and of course he did not forget to send a special messenger to Clémentine. Fougas, after speaking to the people, returned to his hosts, swinging himself along with a swaggering air, set himself astride a chair, took hold of the ends of his mustache, and said:—

«Well! Come, let's talk this over. I've been sick, then?»

«Very sick.»

«That's incredible! I feel entirely well; I'm hungry; and moreover, while waiting for dinner I'll try a glass of your schnick.»

Mme. Renault went out, gave an order, and returned in an instant.

«But tell me, then, where I am?» resumed the colonel. «By these paraphernalia of work, I recognize a disciple of Urania; possibly a friend of Monge and Berthollet. But the cordial friendliness impressed on your countenances proves to me that you are not natives of this land of sauerkraut. Yes, I believe it from the beatings of my heart. Friends, we have the same fatherland. The kindness of your reception, even were there no other indications, would have satisfied me that you are French. What accidents have brought you so far from our native soil? Children of my country, what tempest has thrown you upon this inhospitable shore?»

«My dear colonel,» replied M. Nibor, «if you want to become very wise, you will not ask so many questions at once. Allow us the pleasure of instructing you quietly and in order, for you have a great many things to learn.»

The colonel flushed with anger, and answered sharply:—

«At all events, you are not the man to teach them to me, my little gentleman!»

A drop of blood which fell on his hand changed the current of his thoughts.

«Hold on!» said he: «am I bleeding?»

«That will amount to nothing: circulation is re-established, and—and your broken ear—»

He quickly carried his hand to his ear, and said:—

«It's certainly so. But devil take me if I recollect this accident!»

«I'll make you a little dressing, and in a couple of days there will be no trace of it left.»

«Don't give yourself the trouble, my dear Hippocrates: a pinch of powder is a sovereign cure!»

M. Nibor set to work to dress the ear in a little less military fashion. During his operations Léon re-entered.

«Ah! ah!» said he to the doctor: «you are repairing the harm I did.»

«Thunderation!» cried Fougas, escaping from the hands of M. Nibor so as to seize Léon by the collar, «was it you, you rascal, that hurt my ear?»

Léon was very good-natured, but his patience failed him. He pushed his man roughly aside.

«Yes, sir: it was I who tore your ear, in pulling it; and if that little misfortune had not happened to me, it is certain that you would have been to-day six feet under ground. It is I who saved your life, after buying you with my money when you were not valued at more than twenty-five louis. It is I who have passed three days and two nights in cramming charcoal under your boiler. It is my father who gave you the clothes you now have on. You are in our house. Drink the little glass of brandy Gothon just brought you; but for God's sake give up the habit of calling me rascal, of calling my mother 'Good Mother,' and of flinging our friends into the street and calling them beggarly pandours!»

The colonel, all dumbfounded, held out his hand to Léon, M. Renault, and the doctor, gallantly kissed the hand of Mme. Renault, swallowed at a gulp a claret glass filled to the brim with brandy, and said, in a subdued voice:—

«Most excellent friends, forget the vagaries of an impulsive but generous soul. To subdue my passions shall hereafter be my law. After conquering all the nations in the universe, it is well to conquer one's self.»

This said, he submitted his ear to M. Nibor, who finished dressing it.

« But, » said he, summoning up his recollections, « they did not shoot me, then ? »

« No. »

« And I wasn't frozen to death in the tower ? »

« Not quite. »

« Why has my uniform been taken off ? I see ! I am a prisoner ! »

« You are free. »

« Free ! *Vive l'Empéreur !* But then there's not a moment to lose ! How many leagues is it to Dantzic ? »

« It's very far. »

« What do you call this chicken-coop of a town ? »

« Fontainebleau. »

« Fontainebleau ! In France ? »

« Préfecture of Seine-et-Marne. We are going to introduce to you the sub-préfect, whom you just pitched into the street. »

« What the devil are your sub-préfects to me ? I have a message from the Emperor to General Rapp, and I must start this very day for Dantzic. God knows whether I'll be there in time ! »

« My poor colonel, you will arrive too late. Dantzic is given up. »

« That's impossible ! Since when ? »

« About forty-six years ago. »

« Thunder ! I did not understand that you were — mocking me ! »

M. Nibor placed in his hand a calendar, and said, « See for yourself ! It is now the 17th of August, 1859; you went to sleep in the tower of Liebenfeld on the 11th of November, 1813: there have been, then, forty-six years, within three months, during which the world has moved on without you. »

« Twenty-four and forty-six: but then I would be seventy years old, according to your statement ! »

« Your vitality clearly shows that you are still twenty-four. »

He shrugged his shoulders, tore up the calendar, and said, beating the floor with his foot, « Your almanac is a humbug ! »

M. Renault ran to his library, took up half a dozen books at haphazard, and made him read, at the foot of the title-pages, the dates 1826, 1833, 1847, and 1858.

« Pardon me! » said Fougas, burying his head in his hands. « What has happened to me is so new! I do not think that another human being was ever subjected to such a trial. I am seventy years old! »

Good Mme. Renault went and got a looking-glass from the bath-room and gave it to him, saying:—

« Look! »

He took the glass in both hands, and was silently occupied in resuming acquaintance with himself, when a hand-organ came into the court and began playing 'Partant pour la Syrie.'

Fougas threw the mirror to the ground, and cried out:—

« What is that you are telling me? I hear the little song of Queen Hortense! »

M. Renault patiently explained to him, while picking up the pieces of the mirror, that the pretty little song of Queen Hortense had become a national air, and even an official one, since the regimental bands had substituted that gentle melody for the fierce 'Marseillaise'; and that our soldiers, strange to say, had not fought any the worse for it. But the colonel had already opened the window, and was crying out to the Savoyard with the organ:—

« Eh! Friend! A napoleon for you if you will tell me in what year I am drawing the breath of life! »

The artist began dancing as lightly as possible, playing on his musical instrument.

« Advance at the order! » cried the colonel, « and keep that devilish machine still! »

« A little penny, my good monsieur! »

« It is not a penny that I'll give you, but a napoleon, if you'll tell what year it is. »

« Oh, but that's funny! Hi—hi—hi! »

« And if you don't tell me quicker than this amounts to, I'll cut your ears off! »

The Savoyard ran away, but he came back pretty soon, having meditated, during his flight, on the maxim « Nothing risk, nothing gain. »

« Monsieur, » said he, in a wheedling voice, « this is the year eighteen hundred and fifty-nine. »

« Good! » cried Fougas. He felt in his pockets for money, and found nothing there. Léon saw his predicament, and flung twenty francs into the court. Before shutting the window, he pointed out, to the right, the façade of a pretty little new building, where the colonel could distinctly read:—

AUDRET ARCHITECTE
MDCCCLIX

A perfectly satisfactory piece of evidence, and one which did not cost twenty francs.

Fougas, a little confused, pressed Léon's hand and said to him:—

« My friend, I do not forget that Confidence is the first duty from Gratitude toward Beneficence. But tell me of our country! I tread the sacred soil where I received my being, and I am ignorant of the career of my native land. France is still the queen of the world, is she not? »

« Certainly, » said Léon.

« How is the Emperor? »

« Well. »

« And the Empress? »

« Very well. »

« And the King of Rome? »

« The Prince Imperial? He is a very fine child. »

« How? A fine child! And you have the face to say that this is 1859! »

M. Nibor took up the conversation, and explained in a few words that the reigning sovereign of France was not Napoleon I., but Napoleon III.

« But then, » cried Fougas, « my Emperor is dead! »

« Yes. »

« Impossible! Tell me anything you will but that! My Emperor is immortal. »

M. Nibor and the Renaults, who were not quite professional historians, were obliged to give him a summary of the history of our century. Some one went after a big book, written by M. de Norvins and illustrated with fine engravings by Raffet. He only believed in the presence of Truth when he could touch her with his hand, and still cried out almost every moment, « That's impossible! This is not history that you are reading to me: it is a romance written to make soldiers weep! »

This young man must indeed have had a strong and well-tempered soul; for he learned in forty minutes all the woful events which fortune had scattered through eighteen years, from the first abdication up to the death of the King of Rome. Less happy than his old companions in arms, he had no interval of repose between these terrible and repeated shocks, all beating upon his heart at the same time. One could have feared that the blow might prove mortal, and poor Fougas die in the first hour of his recovered life. But the imp of a fellow yielded and recovered himself in quick succession like a spring. He cried out with admiration on hearing of the five battles of the campaign in France; he reddened with grief at the farewells of Fontainebleau. The return from the Isle of Elba transfigured his handsome and noble countenance; at Waterloo his heart rushed in with the last army of the Empire, and there shattered itself. Then he clenched his fists and said between his teeth, « If I had been there at the head of the Twenty-Third, Blücher and Wellington would have seen another fate! » The invasion, the truce, the martyr of St. Helena, the ghastly terror of Europe, the murder of Murat,—the idol of the cavalry,—the deaths of Ney, Bruno, Mouton-Duvernet, and so many other whole-souled men whom he had known, admired, and loved, threw him into a series of paroxysms of rage; but nothing crushed him. In hearing of the death of Napoleon, he swore that he would eat the heart of England; the slow agony of the pale and interesting heir of the Empire inspired him with a passion to tear the vitals out of Austria. When the drama was over, and the curtain fell on Schönbrunn, he dashed away his tears and said, « It is well. I have lived in a moment a man's entire life. Now show me the map of France! »

Léon began to turn over the leaves of an atlas, while M. Renault attempted to continue narrating to the colonel the history of the Restoration, and of the monarchy of 1830. But Fougas's interest was in other things.

« What do I care, » said he, « if a couple of hundred babblers of deputies put one king in place of another? Kings! I've seen enough of them in the dirt. If the Empire had lasted ten years longer, I could have had a king for a bootblack. »

When the atlas was placed before him, he at once cried out with profound disdain, « That France? » But soon two tears of pitying affection, escaping from his eyes, swelled the rivers Ardèche and Gironde. He kissed the map and said, with an emotion which communicated itself to nearly all those who were present :—

"Forgive me, poor old love, for insulting your misfortunes. Those scoundrels whom we always whipped have profited by my sleep to pare down your frontiers; but little or great, rich or poor, you are my mother, and I love you as a faithful son! Here is Corsica, where the giant of our age was born; here is Toulouse, where I first saw the light; here is Nancy, where I felt my heart awakened — where, perhaps, she whom I call my Æglé waits for me still! France! Thou hast a temple in my soul; this arm is thine; thou shalt find me ever ready to shed my blood to the last drop in defending or avenging thee!"

ACCADIAN-BABYLONIAN AND ASSYRIAN LITERATURE

BY CRAWFORD H. TOY

RECENT discoveries have carried the beginnings of civilization farther and farther back into the remote past. Scholars are not agreed as to what region can lay claim to the greatest literary antiquity. The oldest historical records are found in Egypt and Babylonia, and each of these lands has its advocates, who claim for it priority in culture. The data now at our command are not sufficient for the decision of this question. It may be doubted whether any one spot on the globe will ever be shown to have precedence in time over all others, — whether, that is, it will appear that the civilization of the world has proceeded from a single centre. But though we are yet far from having reached the very beginnings of culture, we know that they lie farther back than the wildest dreams of half a century ago would have imagined. Established kingdoms existed in Babylonia in the fourth millennium before the beginning of our era; royal inscriptions have been found which are with great probability assigned to about the year 3800 B. C. These are, it is true, of the simplest description, consisting of a few sentences of praise to a deity or brief notices of a campaign or of the building of a temple; but they show that the art of writing was known, and that the custom existed of recording events of the national history. We may thence infer the existence of a settled civilization and of some sort of literary productiveness.

The Babylonian-Assyrian writings with which we are acquainted may be divided into the two classes of prose and poetry. The former class consists of royal inscriptions (relating to military campaigns and the construction of temples), chronological tables (eponym canons), legal documents (sales, suits, etc.), grammatical tables (paradigms and vocabularies), lists of omens and lucky and unlucky days, and letters and reports passing between kings and governors; the latter class includes cosmogonic poems, an epic poem in twelve books, detached mythical narratives, magic formulas and incantations, and prayers to deities (belonging to the ritual service of the temples). The prose pieces, with scarcely an exception, belong to the historical period, and may be dated with something like accuracy. The same thing is true of a part of the poetical material, particularly the prayers; but the cosmogonic and other mythical poems appear to go back, at least so far as their material is concerned, to a very remote antiquity, and it is difficult to assign them a definite date.

Whether this oldest poetical material belongs to the Semitic Babylonians or to a non-Semitic (Sumerian-Accadian) people is a question not yet definitely decided. The material which comes into consideration for the solution of this problem is mainly linguistic. Along with the inscriptions, which are obviously in the Semitic-Babylonian language, are found others composed of words apparently strange. These are held by some scholars to represent a priestly, cryptographic writing, by others to be true Semitic words in slightly altered form, and by others still to belong to a non-Semitic tongue. This last view supposes that the ancient poetry comes, in substance at any rate, from a non-Semitic people who spoke this tongue; while on the other hand, it is maintained that this poetry is so interwoven into Semitic life that it is impossible to regard it as of foreign origin. The majority of Semitic scholars are now of the opinion that the origin of this early literature is foreign. However this may be, it comes to us in Babylonian dress, it has been elaborated by Babylonian hands, has thence found its way into the literature of other Semitic peoples, and for our purposes may be accepted as Babylonian. In any case it carries us back to very early religious conceptions.

The cosmogonic poetry is in its outlines not unlike that of Hesiod, but develops the ruder ideas at greater length. In the shortest (but probably not the earliest) form of the cosmogony, the beginning of all things is found in the watery abyss. Two abysmal powers (Tiamat and Apsu), represented as female and male, mingle their waters, and from them proceed the gods. The list of deities (as in the Greek cosmogony) seems to represent several dynasties, a conception which may embody the belief in the gradual organization of the world. After two less-known gods, called Lahmu and Lahamu, come the more familiar figures of later Babylonian writing, Anu and Ea. At this point the list unfortunately breaks off, and the creative function which may have been assigned to the gods is lost, or has not yet been discovered. The general similarity between this account and that of Gen. i. is obvious: both begin with the abysmal chaos. Other agreements between the two cosmogonies will be pointed out below. The most interesting figure in this fragment is that of Tiamat. We shall presently see her in the character of the enemy of the gods. The two conceptions of her do not agree together perfectly, and the priority in time must be assigned to the latter. The idea that the world of gods and men and material things issued out of the womb of the abyss is a philosophic generalization that is more naturally assigned to a period of reflection.

In the second cosmogonic poem the account is more similar to that of the second chapter of Genesis, and its present form originated in or near Babylon. Here we have nothing of the primeval deep, but are told how the gods made a beautiful land, with rivers and trees; how Babylon was built and Marduk created man, and the Tigris and the Euphrates, and the beasts and cities and temples. This also must be looked on as a comparatively late form of the myth, since its hero is Marduk, god of Babylon. As in the Bible account, men are created before beasts, and the region of their first abode seems to be the same as the Eden of Genesis.

Let us now turn to the poem in which the combat between Tiamat and Marduk forms the principal feature. For some unexplained reason Tiamat rebels against the gods. Collecting her hosts, among them frightful demon shapes of all imaginable forms, she advances for the purpose of expelling the gods from their seats. The affrighted deities turn for protection to the high gods, Anu and Ea, who, however, recoil in terror from the hosts of the dragon Tiamat. Anshar then applies to Marduk. The gods are invited to a feast, the situation is described, and Marduk is invited to lead the heavenly hosts against the foe. He agrees on condition that he shall be clothed with absolute power, so that he shall only have to say «Let it be,» and it shall be. To this the gods assent: a garment is placed before him, to which he says «Vanish,» and it vanishes, and when he commands it to appear, it is present. The hero then dons his armor and advances against the enemy. He takes Tiamat and slays her, routs her host, kills her consort Kingu, and utterly destroys the rebellion. Tiamat he cuts in twain. Out of one half of her he forms the heavens, out of the other half the earth, and for the gods Anu and Bel and Ea he makes a heavenly palace, like the abyss itself in extent. To the great gods also he assigns positions, forms the stars, establishes the year and month and the day. At this point the history is interrupted, the tablet being broken. The creation of the heavenly bodies is to be compared with the similar account in Gen. i.; whether this poem narrates the creation of the rest of the world it is impossible to say.

In this history of the rebellion of Tiamat against the gods we have a mythical picture of some natural phenomenon, perhaps of the conflict between the winter and the enlivening sun of summer. The poem appears to contain elements of different dates. The rude character of some of the procedures suggests an early time: Marduk slays Tiamat by driving the wind into her body; the warriors who accompany her have those composite forms familiar to us from Babylonian and Egyptian statues, paintings, and seals, which are the product of that early thought for which there was no essential difference between man and beast. The festival in which the gods carouse is of a piece with the divine Ethiopian feasts of Homer. On the other hand, the idea of the omnipotence of the divine word, when Marduk makes the garment disappear and reappear, is scarcely a primitive one. It is substantially identical with the Biblical «Let it be, and it was.» It is probable that the poem had a long career, and in successive recensions received the coloring of different generations. Tiamat herself has a long history. Here she is a dragon who assaults the gods; elsewhere, as we have seen, she is the mother of the gods; here also her body forms the heaven and the earth. She appears in Gen. i. 2 as the Tehom, the primeval abyss. In the form of the hostile dragon she is found in numerous passages of the Old Testament, though under different names. She is an enemy of Yahwe, god of Israel, and in the New Testament (Rev. xii.) the combat between Marduk and Tiamat is represented under the form of a fight between Michael and the Dragon. In Christian literature Michael has been replaced by St. George. The old Babylonian conception has been fruitful of poetry, representing, as it does, in grand form the struggle between the chaotic and the formative forces of the universe.

The most considerable of the old Babylonian poems, so far as length and literary form are concerned, is that which has been commonly known as the Izdubar epic. The form of the name is not certain: Mr. Pinches has recently proposed, on the authority of a Babylonian text, to write it Gilgamesh, and this form has been adopted by a number of scholars. The poem (discovered by George Smith in 1872) is inscribed on twelve tablets, each tablet apparently containing a separate episode.

The first tablet introduces the hero as the deliverer of his country from the Elamites, an event which seems to have taken place before 2000 B. C. Of the second, third, fourth, and fifth tablets, only fragments exist, but it appears that Gilgamesh slays the Elamite tyrant.

The sixth tablet recounts the love of Ishtar for the hero, to whom she proposes marriage, offering him the tribute of the land. The reason he assigns for his rejection of the goddess is the number and fatal character of her loves. Among the objects of her affection were a wild eagle, a lion, a war-horse, a ruler, and a husbandman; and all these came to grief. Ishtar, angry at her rejection, complains to her father, Anu, and her mother, Anatu, and begs them to avenge her wrong. Anu creates a divine bull and sends it against Gilgamesh, who, however, with the aid of his friend Eabani, slays the bull. Ishtar curses Gilgamesh, but Eabani turns the curse against her.

The seventh tablet recounts how Ishtar descends to the underworld seeking some better way of attacking the hero. The description of the Babylonian Sheol is one of the most effective portions of the poem, and with it George Smith connects a well-known poem which relates the descent of Ishtar to the underworld. The goddess goes down to the house of darkness from which there is no exit, and demands admittance of the keeper; who, however, by command of the queen of the lower world, requires her to submit to the conditions imposed on all who enter. There are seven gates, at each of which he removes some portion of her ornaments and dress. Ishtar, thus unclothed, enters and becomes a prisoner. Meantime the upper earth has felt her absence. All love and life has ceased. Yielding to the persuasions of the gods, Ea sends a messenger to demand the release of the goddess. The latter passes out, receiving at each gate a portion of her clothing. This story of Ishtar's love belongs to one of the earliest stages of religious belief. Not only do the gods appear as under the control of ordinary human passions, but there is no consciousness of material difference between man and beast. The Greek parallels are familiar to all. Of these ideas we find no trace in the later Babylonian and Assyrian literature, and the poem was doubtless interpreted by the Babylonian sages in allegorical fashion.

In the eighth and ninth tablets the death of Eabani is recorded, and the grief of Gilgamesh. The latter then wanders forth in search of Hasisadra, the hero of the Flood-story. After various adventures he reaches the abode of the divinized man, and from him learns the story of the Flood, which is given in the eleventh tablet.

This story is almost identical with that of the Book of Genesis. The God Bel is determined to destroy mankind, and Hasisadra receives directions from Ea to build a ship, and take into it provisions and goods and slaves and beasts of the field. The ship is covered with bitumen. The flood is sent by Shamash (the sun-god). Hasisadra enters the ship and shuts the door. So dreadful is the tempest that the gods in affright ascend for protection to the heaven of Anu. Six days the storm lasts. On the seventh comes calm. Hasisadra opens a window and sees the mountain of Nizir, sends forth a dove, which returns; then a swallow, which returns; then a raven, which does not return; then, knowing that the flood has passed, sends out the animals, builds an altar, and offers sacrifice, over which the gods gather like flies. Ea remonstrates with Bel, and urges that hereafter, when he is angry with men, instead of sending a deluge, he shall send wild beasts, who shall destroy them. Thereupon Bel makes a compact with Hasisadra, and the gods take him and his wife and people and place them in a remote spot at the mouth of the rivers. It is now generally agreed that the Hebrew story of the Flood is taken from the Babylonian, either mediately through the Canaanites (for the Babylonians had occupied Canaan before the sixteenth century B. C.), or immediately during the exile in the sixth century. The Babylonian account is more picturesque, the Hebrew more restrained and solemn. The early polytheistic features have been excluded by the Jewish editors.

In addition to these longer stories there are a number of legends of no little poetical and mythical interest. In the cycle devoted to the eagle there is a story of the struggle between the eagle and the serpent. The latter complains to the sun-god that the eagle has eaten his young. The god suggests a plan whereby the hostile bird may be caught: the body of a wild ox is to be set as a snare. Out of this plot, however, the eagle extricates himself by his sagacity. In the second story the eagle comes to the help of a woman who is struggling to bring a man-child (apparently Etana) into the world. In the third is portrayed the ambition of the hero Etana to ascend to heaven. The eagle promises to aid him in accomplishing his design. Clinging to the bird, he rises with him higher and higher toward the heavenly space, reaching the abode of Anu, and then the abode of Ishtar. As they rise to height after height the eagle describes the appearance of the world lying stretched out beneath: at first it rises like a huge mountain out of the sea; then the ocean appears as a girdle encircling the land, and finally but as a ditch a gardener digs to irrigate his land. When they have risen so high that the earth is scarcely visible, Etana cries to the eagle to stop; so he does, but his strength is exhausted, and bird and man fall to the earth.

Another cycle of stories deals with the winds. The god Zu longs to have absolute power over the world. To that end he lurks about the door of the sun-god, the possessor of the tablets of fate whereby he controls all things. Each morning before beginning his journey, the sun-god steps out to send light showers over the world. Watching his opportunity, Zu glides in, seizes the tablets of fate, and flies away and hides himself in the mountains. So great horror comes over the world: it is likely to be scorched by the sun-god's burning beams. Anu calls on the storm-god Ramman to conquer Zu, but he is frightened and declines the task, as do other gods. Here, unfortunately, the tablet is broken, so that we do not know by whom the normal order was finally restored.

In the collection of cuneiform tablets disinterred at Amarna in 1887 was found the curious story of Adapa. The demigod Adapa, the son of Ea, fishing in the sea for the family of his lord, is overwhelmed by the stormy south wind and cast under the waves. In anger he breaks the wings of the wind, that it may no longer rage in the storm. Anu, informed that the south wind no longer blows, summons Adapa to his presence. Ea instructs his son to put on apparel of mourning, present himself at Anu's gate, and there make friends with the porters, Tammuz and Iszida, so that they may speak a word for him to Anu; going into the presence of the royal deity, he will be offered food and drink which he must reject, and raiment and oil which he must accept. Adapa carries out the instructions of his father to the letter. Anu is appeased, but laments that Adapa, by rejecting heavenly food and drink, has lost the opportunity to become immortal. This story, the record of which is earlier than the sixteenth century B. C., appears to contain two conceptions: it is a mythical description of the history of the south wind, but its conclusion presents a certain parallelism with the end of the story of Eden in Genesis; as there Adam, so here Adapa, fails of immortality because he infringes the divine command concerning the divine food. We have here a suggestion that the story in Genesis is one of the cycle which dealt with the common earthly fact of man's mortality.

The legend of Dibbarra seems to have a historical basis. The god Dibbarra has devastated the cities of Babylonia with bloody wars. Against Babylon he has brought a hostile host and slain its people, so that Marduk, the god of Babylon, curses him. And in like manner he has raged against Erech, and is cursed by its goddess Ishtar. He is charged with confounding the righteous and unrighteous in indiscriminate destruction. But Dibbarra determines to advance against the dwelling of the king of the gods, and Babylonia is to be further desolated by civil war. It is a poetical account of devastating wars as the production of a hostile diety. It is obvious that these legends have many features in common with those of other lands, myths of conflict between wind and sun, and the ambition of heroes to scale the heights of heaven. How far these similarities are the independent products of similar situations, and how far the results of loans, cannot at present be determined.

The moral-religious literature of the Babylonians is not inferior in interest to the stories just mentioned. The hymns to the gods are characterized by a sublimity and depth of feeling which remind us of the odes of the Hebrew Psalter. The penitential hymns appear to contain expressions of sorrow for sin, which would indicate a high development of the religious consciousness. These hymns, apparently a part of the temple ritual, probably belong to a relatively late stage of history; but they are none the less proof that devotional feeling in ancient times was not limited to any one country.

Other productions, such as the hymn to the seven evil spirits (celebrating their mysterious power), indicate a lower stage of religious feeling; this is specially visible in the magic formulas, which portray a very early stratum of religious history. They recall the Shamanism of Central Asia and the rites of savage tribes; but there is no reason to doubt that the Semitic religion in its early stages contained this magic element, which is found all the world over.

Riddles and Proverbs are found among the Babylonians, as among all peoples. Comparatively few have been discovered, and these present nothing of peculiar interest. The following may serve as specimens:—«What is that which becomes pregnant without conceiving, fat without eating?» The answer seems to be «A cloud.» «My coal-brazier clothes me with a divine garment, my rock is founded in the sea» (a volcano). «I dwell in a house of pitch and brick, but over me glide the boats» (a canal). «He that says, ‹Oh, that I might exceedingly avenge myself!› draws from a waterless well, and rubs the skin without oiling it.» «When sickness is incurable and hunger unappeasable, silver and gold cannot restore health nor appease hunger.» «As the oven waxes old, so the foe tires of enmity.» «The life of yesterday goes on every day.» «When the seed is not good, no sprout comes forth.»

The poetical form of all these pieces is characterized by that parallelism of members with which we are familiar in the poetry of the Old Testament. It is rhythmical, but apparently not metrical: the harmonious flow of syllables in any one line, with more or less beats or cadences, is obvious; but it does not appear that syllables were combined into feet, or that there was any fixed rule for the number of syllables or beats in a line. So also strophic divisions may be observed, such divisions naturally resulting from the nature of all narratives. Sometimes the strophe seems to contain four lines, sometimes more. No strophic rule has yet been established; but it seems not unlikely that when the longer poetical pieces shall have been more definitely fixed in form, certain principles of poetical composition will present themselves. The thought of the mythical pieces and the prayers and hymns is elevated and imaginative. Some of this poetry appears to have belonged to a period earlier than 2000 B. C. Yet the Babylonians constructed no epic poem like the ‹Iliad,› or at any rate none such has yet been found. Their genius rather expressed itself in brief or fragmentary pieces, like the Hebrews and the Arabs.

The Babylonian prose literature consists almost entirely of short chronicles and annals. Royal inscriptions have been found covering the period from 3000 B. C. to 539 B. C. There are eponym canons, statistical lists, diplomatic letters, military reports; but none of these rise to the dignity of history. Several connected books of chronicles have indeed been found; there is a synchronistic book of annals of Babylonia and Assyria, there is a long Assyrian chronicle, and there are annalistic fragments. But there is no digested historical narrative, which gives a clear picture of the general civil and political situation, or any analysis of the characters of kings, generals, and governors, or any inquiry into causes of events. It is possible that narratives having a better claim to the name of history may yet be discovered, resembling those of the Biblical Book of Kings; yet the Book of Kings is scarcely history — neither the Jews nor the Babylonians and Assyrians seem to have had great power in this direction.

One of the most interesting collections of historical pieces is that recently discovered at Amarna. Here, out of a mound which represents a palace of the Egyptian King Amenhotep IV., were dug up numerous letters which were exchanged between the kings of Babylonia and Egypt in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and numerous reports sent to the Egyptian government by Egyptian governors of Canaanite cities. These tablets show that at this early time there was lively communication between the Euphrates and the Nile, and they give a vivid picture of the chaotic state of affairs in Canaan, which was exposed to the assaults of enemies on all sides. This country was then in possession of Egypt, but at a still earlier period it must have been occupied by the Babylonians. Only in this way can we account for the surprising fact that the Babylonian cuneiform script and the Babylonian language form the means of communication between the east and west and between Egypt and Canaan. The literary value of these letters is not great; their interest is chiefly historic and linguistic. The same thing is true of the contract tablets, which are legal documents: these cover the whole area of Babylonian history, and show that civil law attained a high state of perfection; they are couched in the usual legal phrases.

The literary monuments mentioned above are all contained in tablets, which have the merit of giving in general contemporaneous records of the things described. But an account of Babylonian literature would be incomplete without mention of the priest Berosus. Having, as priest of Bel, access to the records of the temples, he wrote a history of his native land, in which he preserved the substance of a number of poetical narratives, as well as the ancient accounts of the political history. The fragments of his work which have been preserved (see Cory's 'Ancient Fragments') exhibit a number of parallels with the contents of the cuneiform tablets. Though he wrote in Greek (he lived in the time of Alexander the Great), and was probably trained in the Greek learning of his time, his work doubtless represents the spirit of Babylonian historical writing. So far as can be judged from the remains which have come down to us, its style is of the annalistic sort which appears in the old inscriptions and in the historical books of the Bible.

The Babylonian literature above described must be understood to include the Assyrian. Civilization was first established in Babylonia, and there apparently were produced the great epic poems and the legends. But Assyria, when she succeeded to the headship of the Mesopotamian valley, in the twelfth century B. C., adopted the literature of her southern sister. A great part of the old poetry has been found in the library of Assurbanipal, at Nineveh (seventh century B. C.), where a host of scribes occupied themselves with the study of the ancient literature. They seem to have had almost all the apparatus of modern critical work. Tablets were edited, sometimes with revisions. There are bilingual tablets, presenting in parallel columns the older texts (called Sumerian-Accadian) and the modern version. There are numerous grammatical and lexicographical lists. The records were accessible, and often consulted. Assurbanipal, in bringing back a statue of the goddess Nana from the Elamite region, says that it was carried off by the Elamites 1635 years before; and Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon (circa B. C. 550), a man devoted to temple restoration, refers to an inscription of King Naram-Sin, of Agane, who, he says, reigned 3200 years before. In recent discoveries made at Nippur, by the American Babylonian Expedition, some Assyriologists find evidence of the existence of a Babylonian civilization many centuries before B. C. 4000 (the dates B. C. 5000 and B. C. 6000 have been mentioned); the material is now undergoing examination, and it is too early to make definite statements of date. See Peters in American Journal of Archæology for January–March, 1895, and July–September, 1895; and Hilprecht, 'The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania,' Vol. i., Part 2, 1896.

The Assyrian and Babylonian historical inscriptions, covering as they do the whole period of Jewish history down to the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, are of very great value for the illustration of the Old Testament. They have a literary interest also. Many of them are written in semi-rhythmical style, a form which was favored by the inscriptional mode of writing. The sentences are composed of short parallel clauses, and the nature of the material induced a division into paragraphs which resemble strophes. They are characterized also by precision and pithiness of statement, and are probably as trustworthy as official records ever are.

CHToy

I. THEOGONY

In the time when above the heaven was not named,
The earth beneath bore no name,
When the ocean, the primeval parent of both,
The abyss Tiamat the mother of both . . .

The waters of both mingled in one,
No fields as yet were tilled, no moors to be seen,
When as yet of the gods not one had been produced,

No names they bore, no titles they had,
Then were born of the gods . . .
Lachmu Lachamu came into existence.
Many ages past . . .
Anshar, Kishar were born.
Many days went by. Anu . . .

[Here there is a long lacuna. The lost lines completed the history of the creation of the gods, and gave the reason for the uprising of Tiamat with her hosts. What it was that divided the divine society into two hostile camps can only be conjectured; probably Tiamat, who represents the unfriendly or chaotic forces of nature, saw that her domain was being encroached on by the light-gods, who stand for cosmic order.]

II. REVOLT OF TIAMAT

To her came flocking all the gods,
They gathered together, they came to Tiamat;
Angry they plan, restless by night and by day,
Prepare for war with gestures of rage and hate,
With combined might to begin the battle.
The mother of the abyss, she who created them all,
Unconquerable warriors, gave them giant snakes,
Sharp of tooth, pitiless in might,
With poison like blood she filled their bodies,
Huge poisonous adders raging, she clothed them with dread,
Filled them with splendor . . .
He who sees them shuddering shall seize him,
They rear their bodies, none can resist their breast.
Vipers she made, terrible snakes . . .
. . . raging dogs, scorpion-men . . . fish men . . .
Bearing invincible arms, fearless in the fight.
Stern are her commands, not to be resisted.

Of all the first-born gods, because he gave her help,
She raised up Kingu in the midst, she made him the greatest,
To march in front of the host, to lead the whole,
To begin the war of arms, to advance the attack,
Forward in the fight to be the triumpher.
This she gave into his hand, made him sit on the throne:—
By my command I make thee great in the circle of the gods;
Rule over all the gods I have given to thee,
The greatest shalt thou be, thou my chosen consort;
Be thy name made great over all the earth.
She gave him the tablets of fate, laid them on his breast.
Thy command be not gainsaid, thy word stand fast.
Thus lifted up on high, endued with Anu's rank,
Among the gods her children Kingu did bear rule.

[The gods, dismayed, first appeal to Anu for aid against Tiamat, but he refuses to lead the attack. Anshar then sends to invite the gods to a feast.]

Anshar opened his mouth,
To Gaga, his servant, spake he:—
Go, O Gaga, my servant thou who delightest my soul,
To Lachmu Lachamu I will send thee . . .
That the gods may sit at the feast,
Bread to eat, wine to drink,
To give the rule to Marduk.
Up Gaga, to them go,
And tell what I say to thee:—
Anshar, your son, has sent me,
Told me the desire of his heart.

[He repeats the preceding description of Tiamat's preparations, and announces that Marduk has agreed to face the foe.]

I sent Anu, naught can he against her.
Nudimmud was afraid and turned cowering back,
Marduk accepted the task, the ruler of gods, your son,
Against Tiamat to march his heart impels him.
So speaks he to me:
If I succeed, I, your avenger,
Conquer Tiamat and save your lives.
Come, ye all, and declare me supreme,
In Upsukkenaku enter ye joyfully all.
With my mouth will I bear rule,
Unchangeable be whate'er I do,
The word of my lips be never reversed or gainsaid.
Come and to him give over the rule,
That he may go and meet the evil foe.

Gaga went, strode on his way,
Humbly before Lachmu and Lachamu, the gods, his fathers,
He paid his homage and kissed the ground,
Bent lowly down and to them spake:—
Anshar, your son, has sent me,
Told me the desire of his heart.

[Gaga then repeats Anshar's message at length, and the narrative proceeds.]

Lachmu and Lachamu heard and were afraid,
The Igigi all lamented sore:
What change has come about that she thus hates us?
We cannot understand this deed of Tiamat.
With hurry and haste they went,
The great gods, all the dealers of fate,
. . . with eager tongue, sat themselves down to the feast.
Bread they ate, wine they drank,
The sweet wine entered their souls,
They drank their fill, full were their bodies.

[In this happy state they were ready to accept Marduk's conditions.]

To Marduk, their avenger, they gave over the rule.
They lifted him up on a lofty throne,
Above his fathers he took his place as judge:—
Most honored be thou among the great gods,
Unequaled thy rule, thy word is Anu.
From this time forth thy command be not gainsaid;
To lift up and cast down be the work of thy hand;
The speech of thy mouth stand fast, thy word be irresistible,
None of the gods shall intrude on thy domain,
Fullness of wealth, the desire of the temples of the gods,
Be the portion of thy shrine, though they be in need.
Marduk, thou, our avenger,
Thine be the kingdom over all forever.
Sit thee down in might, noble be thy word,
Thy arms shall never yield, the foes they shall crush.
O lord, he who trusts in thee, him grant thou life,
But the deity who set evil on foot, her life pour out.
Then in the midst they placed a garment.
To Marduk their first-born thus spake they:—
Thy rule, O lord, be chief among the gods,
To destroy and to create — speak and let it be.

Open thy mouth, let the garment vanish.
Utter again thy command, let the garment appear.
He spake with his mouth, vanished the garment;
Again he commanded, and the garment appeared.
When the gods, his fathers, saw thus his word fulfilled,
Joyful were they and did homage: Marduk is king.
On him conferred sceptre and throne. . . .
Gave him invincible arms to crush them that hate him.
Now go and cut short the life of Tiamat,
May the winds into a secret place carry her blood.
The ruler of the gods they made him, the gods, his fathers,
Wished him success and glory in the way on which he went.
He made ready a bow, prepared it for use,
Made ready a spear to be his weapon.
He took the . . . seized it in his right hand,
Bow and quiver hung at his side,
Lightning he fashioned flashing before him,
With glowing flame he filled its body,
A net he prepared to seize Tiamat,
Guarded the four corners of the world that nothing of her should escape,
On South and North, on East and West
He laid the net, his father Anu's gift.
He fashioned the evil wind, the south blast, the tornado,
The four-and-seven wind, the wind of destruction and woe,
Sent forth the seven winds which he had made
Tiamat's body to destroy, after him they followed.
Then seized the lord the thunderbolt, his mighty weapon,
The irresistible chariot, the terrible, he mounted,
To it four horses he harnessed, pitiless, fiery, swift,
Their teeth were full of venom covered with foam.
. . .

On it mounted Marduk the mighty in battle.
To right and left he looked, lifting his eye.
His terrible brightness surrounded his head.
Against her he advanced, went on his way,
To Tiamat lifted his face.
. . .

They looked at him, at him looked the gods,
The gods, his fathers, looked at him; at him looked the gods.
And nearer pressed the lord, with his eye piercing Tiamat.
On Kingu her consort rested his look.
As he so looked, every way is stopped.

His senses Kingu loses, vanishes his thought,
And the gods, his helpers, who stood by his side
Saw their leader powerless . . .
But Tiamat stood, not turning her back.
With fierce lips to him she spake:—
. . .
Then grasped the lord his thunderbolt, his mighty weapon,
Angry at Tiamat he hurled his words:—
. . . .
When Tiamat heard these words,
She fell into fury, beside herself was she.
Tiamat cried wild and loud
Till through and through her body shook.
She utters her magic formula, speaks her word,
And the gods of battle rush to arms.
Then advance Tiamat, and Marduk the ruler of the gods
To battle they rush, come on to the fight.
His wide-stretched net over her the lord did cast,
The evil wind from behind him he let loose in her face.
Tiamat opened her throat as wide as she might,
Into it he sent the evil wind before she could close her lips.
The terrible winds filled her body,
Her senses she lost, wide open stood her throat.
He seized his spear, through her body he ran it,
Her inward parts he hewed, cut to pieces her heart.
Her he overcame, put an end to her life,
Cast away her corpse and on it stood.
So he, the leader, slew Tiamat,
Her power he crushed, her might he destroyed.
Then the gods, her helpers, who stood at her side,
Fear and trembling seized them, their backs they turned,
Away they fled to save their lives.
Fast were they girt, escape they could not,
Captive he took them, broke in pieces their arms.
They were caught in the net, sat in the toils,
All the earth they filled with their cry.
Their doom they bore, held fast in prison,
And the eleven creatures, clothed with dread,
A herd of demons who with her went,
These he subdued, destroyed their power,
Crushed their valor, trod them under foot;
And Kingu, who had grown great over them all,
Him he overcame with the god Kugga,
Took from him the tablets of fate which were not rightfully [his,

Stamped thereon his seal, and hung them on his breast.
When thus the doughty Marduk had conquered his foes,
His proud adversary to shame had brought,
Had completed Anshar's triumph over the enemy,
Had fulfilled Nudimmud's will,
Then the conquered gods he put in prison,
And to Tiamat, whom he had conquered, returned.
Under his foot the lord Tiamat's body trod,
With his irresistible club he shattered her skull,
Through the veins of her blood he cut;
Commanded the north wind to bear it to a secret place.
His fathers saw it, rejoiced and shouted.
Gifts and offerings to him they brought.
The lord was appeased seeing her corpse.
Dividing her body, wise plans he laid.
Into two halves like a fish he divided her,
Out of one half he made the vault of heaven,
A bar he set and guards he posted,
Gave them command that the waters pass not through.
Through the heaven he strode, viewed its spaces,
Near the deep placed Nudimmud's dwelling.
And the lord measured the domain of the deep,
A palace like it, Eshara, he built,
The palace Eshara which he fashioned as heaven.
Therein made he Anu, Bel, and Ea to dwell.
He established the station of the great gods,
Stars which were like them, constellations he set,
The year he established, marked off its parts,
Divided twelve months by three stars,
From the day that begins the year to the day that ends it
He established the station Nibir to mark its limits.
That no harm come, no one go astray,
The stations of Bel and Ea he set by its side.
Great doors he made on this side and that,
Closed them fast on left and right.

. . .

The moon-god he summoned, to him committed the night.

[Here the account breaks off; there probably followed the history of the creation of the earth and of man.]

III. FRAGMENTS OF A DESCENT TO THE UNDERWORLD

To the underworld I turn,
I spread my wings like a bird,
I descend to the house of darkness, to the dwelling of Irkalla,
To the house from which there is no exit,
The road on which there is no return,
To the house whose dwellers long for light,
Dust is their nourishment and mud their food,
Whose chiefs are like feathered birds,
Where light is never seen, in darkness they dwell.
In the house which I will enter
There is treasured up for me a crown,
With the crowned ones who of old ruled the earth,
To whom Anu and Bel have given terrible names,
Carrion is their food, their drink stagnant water.
There dwell the chiefs and unconquered ones,
There dwell the bards and the mighty men,
Monsters of the deep of the great gods.
It is the dwelling of Etana, the dwelling of Ner,
Of Ninkigal, the queen of the underworld . . .
Her I will approach and she will see me.

Ishtar's Descent to the Underworld

[After a description substantially identical with the first half of the preceding poem, the story goes on:—]

To the gate of the underworld Ishtar came,
To the keeper of the gate her command she addressed:—
Keeper of the waters, open thy gate,
Open thy gate that I may enter.
If thou open not the gate and let me in,
I will strike the door, the posts I will shatter,
I will strike the hinges, burst open the doors,
I will raise up the dead devourers of the living,
Over the living the dead shall triumph.
The keeper opened his mouth and spake,
To the Princess Ishtar he cried:—
Stay, lady, do not thus,
Let me go and repeat thy words to Queen Ninkigal.

[He goes and gets the terrible queen's permission for Ishtar to enter on certain conditions.]

Through the first gate he caused her to pass,
The crown of her head he took away.
Why, O keeper, takest thou away the great crown of my head?
Thus, O lady, the goddess of the underworld doeth to all her visitors at the entrance.
Through the second gate he caused her to pass,
The earrings of her ears he took away.
Why, O keeper, takest thou away the earrings of my ears?
So, O lady, the goddess of the underworld doeth to all that enter her realm.

[And so at each gate till she is stripped of clothing. A long time Ninkigal holds her prisoner, and in the upper world love vanishes and men and gods mourn. Ea sees that Ishtar must return, and sends his messenger to bring her.]

Go forth, O messenger,
Toward the gates of the underworld set thy face,
Let the seven gates of Hades be opened at thy presence,
Let Ninkigal see thee and rejoice at thy arrival,
That her heart be satisfied and her anger be removed.
Appease her by the names of the great gods . . .
Ninkigal, when this she heard,
Beat her breast and wrung her hands,
Turned away, no comfort would she take.
Go, thou messenger,
Let the great jailer keep thee,
The refuse of the city be thy food,
The drains of the city thy drink,
The shadow of the dungeon be thy resting-place,
The slab of stone be thy seat.
Ninkigal opened her mouth and spake,
To Simtar, her attendant, her command she gave.
Go, Simtar, strike the palace of judgment,
Pour over Ishtar the water of life, and bring her before me.
Simtar went and struck the palace of judgment,
On Ishtar he poured the water of life and brought her.
Through the first gate he caused her to pass,
And restored to her her covering cloak.

[And so through the seven gates till all her ornaments are restored. The result of the visit to the underworld is not described.]

IV. THE FLOOD

[The hero Gilgamesh (Izdubar), wandering in search of healing for his sickness, finds Hasisadra (Xisuthros), the Babylonian Noah, who tells him the story of the Flood.]

HASISADRA spake to him, to Gilgamesh:—
To thee I will reveal, Gilgamesh, the story of my deliverance,
And the oracle of the gods I will make known to thee.
The city Surippak, which, as thou knowest,
Lies on the Euphrates' bank,
Already old was this city
When the gods that therein dwell
To send a flood their heart impelled them,
All the great gods: their father Anu,
Their counsellor the warlike Bel,
Adar their throne-bearer and the Prince Ennúgi.
The lord of boundless wisdom,
Ea, sat with them in council.
Their resolve he announced and so he spake:—
O thou of Surippak, son of Ubaratutu,
Leave thy house and build a ship.
They will destroy the seed of life.
Do thou preserve in life, and hither bring the seed of life
Of every sort into the ship.

[Here follows a statement of the dimensions of the ship, but the numbers are lost.]

When this I heard to Ea my lord I spake:—
The building of the ship, O lord, which thou commandest
If I perform it, people and elders will mock me.
Ea opened his mouth and spake,
Spake to me, his servant:—

[The text is here mutilated: Hasisadra is ordered to threaten the mockers with Ea's vengeance.]

Thou, however, shut not thy door till I shall send thee word.
Then pass through the door and bring
All grain and goods and wealth,
Family, servants and maids and all thy kin,
The cattle of the field, the beasts of the field.
Hasisadra opened his mouth, to Ea his lord he said:—
O my lord, a ship in this wise hath no one ever built . . .

[Hasisadra tells how he built the ship according to Ea's directions.]

All that I had I brought together,
All of silver and all of gold,
And all of the seed of life into the ship I brought.
And my household, men and women,
The cattle of the field, the beasts of the field,
And all my kin I caused to enter.
Then when the sun the destined time brought on,
To me he said at even-fall:—
Destruction shall the heaven rain.
Enter the ship and close the door.
With sorrow on that day I saw the sun go down.
The day on which I was to enter the ship I was afraid.
Yet into the ship I went, behind me the door I closed.
Into the hands of the steersman I gave the ship with its cargo.
Then from the heaven's horizon rose the dark cloud
Raman uttered his thunder,
Nabu and Sarru rushed on,
Over hill and dale strode the throne-bearers,
Adar sent ceaseless streams, floods the Anunnaki brought.
Their power shakes the earth,

. . . .

Raman's billows up to heaven mount,
All light to darkness is turned.

. . . .

Brother looks not after brother, no man for another cares.
The gods in heaven are frightened, refuge they seek,
Upward they mount to the heaven of Anu.
Like a dog in his lair,
So cower the gods together at the bars of heaven.
Ishtar cries out in pain, loud cries the exalted goddess:—
All is turned to mire.
This evil to the gods I announced, to the gods foretold the evil.
This extérminating war foretold
Against my race of mankind.
Not for this bare I men that like the brood of the fishes
They should fill the sea.
Then wept the gods with her over the Anunnaki,
In lamentation sat the gods, their lips hard pressed together.
Six days and seven nights ruled wind and flood and storm.
But when the seventh day broke, subsided the storm, and the flood

ASSYRIAN CLAY TABLET.

Containing a part of the story of the flood, from the library of Assurbanipal. Found in recent explorations in Ancient Babylon.

London: British Museum.

Which raged like a mighty host, settled itself to quiet.
Down went the sea, ceased storm and flood.
Through the sea I rode lamenting.
The upper dwellings of men were ruined,
Corpses floated like trees.
A window I opened, on my face the daylight fell.
I shuddered and sat me down weeping,
Over my face flowed my tears.
I rode over regions of land, on a terrible sea.
Then rose one piece of land twelve measures high.
To the land Nizir the ship was steered,
The mountain Nizir held the ship fast, and let it no more go.

. . . .

At the dawn of the seventh day
I took a dove and sent it forth.
Hither and thither flew the dove,
No resting-place it found, back to me it came.
A swallow I took and sent it forth,
No resting-place it found, and back to me it came.
A raven I took and sent it forth,
Forth flew the raven and saw that the water had fallen,
Carefully waded on but came not back.
All the animals then to the four winds I sent.
A sacrifice I offered,
An altar I built on the mountain-top,
By sevens I placed the vessels,
Under them spread sweet cane and cedar.
The gods inhaled the smoke, inhaled the sweet-smelling smoke,
Like flies the gods collected over the offering.
Thither then came Ishtar,
Lifted on high her bow, which Anu had made:—
These days I will not forget, will keep them in remembrance,
Them I will never forget.
Let the gods come to the altar,
But let not Bel to the altar come,
Because he heedlessly wrought, the flood he brought on,
To destruction my people gave over.
Thither came Bel and saw the ship,
Full of anger was he
Against the gods and the spirits of heaven:—
What soul has escaped!

In the destruction no man shall live.
Then Adar opened his mouth and spake,
Spake to the warlike Bel:—
Who but Ea knew it?
He knew and all he hath told.
Then Ea opened his mouth,
Spake to the warlike Bel:—
Thou art the valiant leader of the gods,
Why hast thou heedlessly wrought, and brought on the flood?
Let the sinner bear his sin, the wrongdoer his wrong;
Yield to our request, that he be not wholly destroyed.
Instead of sending a flood, send lions that men be reduced;
Instead of sending a flood, send hyenas that men be reduced;
Instead of sending a flood, send flames to waste the land;
Instead of sending a flood, send pestilence that men be reduced.
The counsel of the great gods to him I did not impart;
A dream to Hasisadra I sent, and the will of the gods he learned.
Then came right reason to Bel,
Into the ship he entered,
Took my hand and lifted me up,
Raised my wife and laid her hand in mine,
To us he turned, between us he stepped,
His blessing he gave.
Human Hasisadra has been,
But he and his wife united
Now to the gods shall be raised,
And Hasisadra shall dwell far off at the mouth of the streams.
Then they took me and placed me
Far off at the mouth of the streams.

V. THE EAGLE AND THE SNAKE

To Samas came the snake and said:—
The eagle has come to my nest, my young are scattered.
See, O Samas, what evil he has done me.
Help me, thy nest is as broad as the earth,
Thy snare is like the heavens,
Who can escape out of thy net?
Hearing the snake's complaint,
Samas opened his mouth and spake:—
Get thee on thy way, go to the mountain.
A wild ox shall be thy hiding-place.

Open his body, tear out his inward parts,
Make thy dwelling within him.
All the birds of heaven will descend, with them will come the eagle,
Heedless and hurrying on the flesh he will swoop,
Thinking of that which is hidden inside.
So soon as he enters the ox, seize his wing,
Tear off his wing-feathers and claws,
Pull him to pieces and cast him away,
Let him die of hunger and thirst.
So as the mighty Samas commanded,
Rose the snake, went to the mountain,
There he found a wild ox,
Opened his body, tore out his inward parts,
Entered and dwelt within him.
And the birds of heaven descended, with them came the eagle.
Yet the eagle, fearing a snare, ate not of the flesh with the birds.
The eagle spake to his young:—
We will not fly down, nor eat of the flesh of the wild ox.
An eaglet, keen of eye, thus to his father spake:—
In the flesh of the ox lurks the snake

[The rest is lost.]

VI. THE FLIGHT OF ETANA

THE priests have offered my sacrifice
With joyful hearts to the gods.
O Lord, issue thy command,
Give me the plant of birth, show me the plant of birth.
Bring the child into the world, grant me a son.
Samas opened his mouth and spake to Etana:—
Away with thee, go to the mountain. . . .
The eagle opened his mouth and spake to Etana:—
Wherefore art thou come?
Etana opened his mouth and said to the eagle:—
My friend, give me the plant of birth, show me the plant of birth,
Bring the child into the world, grant me a son. . . .
To Etana then spake the eagle:—
My friend, be of good cheer.
Come, let me bear thee to Anu's heaven.

On my breast lay thy breast,
Grasp with thy hands the feathers of my wings,
On my side lay thy side.
On his breast he laid his breast,
On his feathers he placed his hands,
On his side laid his side,
Firmly he clung, great was his weight.
Two hours he bore him on high.
The eagle spake to him, to Etana:—
See my friend, the land, how it lies,
Look at the sea, the ocean-girded,
Like a mountain looks the land, the sea like petty waters.
Two hours more he bore him up.
The eagle spake to him, to Etana:—
See my friend the land, how it lies,
The sea is like the girdle of the land.
Two hours more he bore him up.
The eagle spake to him, to Etana:—
See my friend the land, how it lies,
The sea is like the gardener's ditches.
Up they rose to Anu's heaven,
Came to the gate of Anu, Bel and Ea. . . .
Come, my friend, let me bear thee to Ishtar,
To Ishtar, the queen, shalt thou go, and dwell at her feet.
On my side lay thy side,
Grasp my wing-feathers with thy hands.
On his side he laid his side,
His feathers he grasped with his hands.
Two hours he bore him on high.
My friend see the land, how it lies,
How it spreads itself out.
The broad sea is as great as a court.
Two hours he bore him on high.
My friend see the land, how it lies,
The land is like the bed of a garden,
The broad sea is as great as a [.]
Two hours he bore him on high.
My friend see the land, how it lies.

[Etana, frightened, begs the eagle to ascend no further; then, as it seems, the bird's strength is exhausted.]

To the earth the eagle fell down
Shattered upon the ground.

VII. THE GOD ZU

HE SEES the badges of rule,
His royal crown, his raiment divine.
On the tablets of fate of the god Zu fixes his look.
On the father of the gods, the god of Duranki, Zu fixes his gaze.
Lust after rule enters into his soul.
I will take the tablets of fate of the gods,
Will determine the oracle of all the gods,
Will set up my throne, all orders control,
Will rule all the heavenly spirits.
His heart was set on combat.
At the entrance of the hall he stands, waiting the break of day.
When Bel dispensed the tender rains,
Sat on his throne, put off his crown,
He snatched the tablets of fate from his hands,
Seized the power, the control of commands.
Down flew Zu, in a mountain he hid.
There was anguish and crying.
On the earth Bel poured out his wrath.
Anu opened his mouth and spake,
Said to the gods his children:—
Who will conquer Zu?
Great shall be his name among the dwellers of all lands.
They called for Ramman, the mighty, Anu's son.
To him gives Anu command:—
Up, Ramman, my son, thou hero,
From thine attack desist not, conquer Zu with thy weapons,
That thy name may be great in the assembly of the great gods.
Among the gods thy brethren, none shall be thy equal.
Thy shrines on high shall be built;
Found thee cities in all the world;
Thy cities shall reach to the mountain of the world;
Show thyself strong for the gods, strong be thy name!
To Anu his father's command Ramman answered and spake:—
My father, who shall come to the inaccessible mound?
Who is like unto Zu among the gods thy sons?
The tablets of fate he has snatched from his hands,
Seized on the power, the control of commands.
Zu has fled and hides in his mountain.

[The rest is lost.]

VIII. ADAPA AND THE SOUTHWIND

UNDER the water the Southwind blew him
Sunk him to the home of the fishes.
O Southwind, ill hast thou used me, thy wings I will break.
As thus with his mouth he spake the wings of the Southwind were broken.
Seven days long the Southwind over the earth blew no more.
To his messenger Ila-Abrat
Anu then spake thus:—
Why for seven days long
Blows the Southwind no more on the earth?
His messenger Ila-Abrat answered and said: My lord,
Adapa, Ea's son, hath broken the wings of the Southwind.
When Anu heard these words,
«Aha!» he cried, and went forth.

[Ea, the ocean-god, then directs his son how to proceed in order to avert Anu's wrath. Some lines are mutilated.]

At the gate of Anu stand.
The gods Tammuz and Iszida will see thee and ask:—
Why lookest thou thus, Adapa,
For whom wearest thou garments of mourning?
From the earth two gods have vanished, therefore do I thus.
Who are these two gods who from the earth have vanished?
At each other they will look, Tammuz and Iszida, and lament.
A friendly word they will speak to Anu
Anu's sacred face they will show thee.
When thou to Anu comest,
Food of death will be offered thee, eat not thereof.
Water of death will be offered thee, drink not thereof.
A garment will be offered thee, put it on.
Oil will be offered thee, anoint thyself therewith.
What I tell thee neglect not, keep my word in mind.
Then came Anu's messenger:—
The wing of the Southwind Adapa has broken,
Deliver him up to me.
Up to heaven he came, approached the gate of Anu.
At Anu's gate Tammuz and Iszida stand,
Adapa they see, and «Aha!» they cry.

O Adapa, wherefore lookest thou thus,
For whom wearest thou apparel of mourning?
From the earth two gods have vanished
Therefore I wear apparel of mourning.
Who are these two gods who from the earth have vanished?
At one another look Tammuz and Iszida and lament.
Adapa go hence to Anu.
When he came, Anu at him looked, saying, O Adapa,
Why hast thou broken the Southwind's wing?
Adapa answered: My lord,
'Fore my lord's house I was fishing.
In the midst of the sea, it was smooth,
Then the Southwind began to blow
Under it forced me, to the home of the fishes I sank.

[By this speech Anu's anger is turned away.]

A beaker he set before him.
What shall we offer him? Food of life
Prepare for him that he may eat.
Food of life was brought for him, but he ate not.
Water of life was brought for him, but he drank not.
A garment was brought him, he put it on,
Oil they gave him, he anointed himself therewith.
Anu looked at him and mourned:—
And now, Adapa, wherefore
Has thou not eaten or drunken?
Now canst thou not live forever . . .
Ea, my lord, commanded me:—
Thou shalt not eat nor drink.

IX. PENITENTIAL PSALMS

I

The Suppliant:

I, THY servant, full of sin cry to thee.
The sinner's earnest prayer thou dost accept,
The man on whom thou lookest lives,
Mistress of all, queen of mankind,
Merciful one, to whom it is good to turn,
Who acceptest the sigh of the heart.

The Priest:

Because his god and his goddess are angry, he cries to thee.
To him turn thy face, take his hand.

The Suppliant:
Beside thee there is no god to guide me.
Look in mercy on me, accept my sigh,
Say why do I wait so long.
Let thy face be softened!
How long, O my lady!
May thy kindness be turned to me!
Like a dove I mourn, full of sighing.

The Priest:
With sorrow and woe
His soul is full of sighing,
Tears he sheds, he pours out laments.

II

O mother of the gods, who performest the commands of Bel,
Who makest the young grass sprout, queen of mankind,
Creator of all, guide of every birth,
Mother Ishtar, whose might no god approaches,
Exalted mistress, mighty in command!
A prayer I will utter, let her do what seems her good.
O my lady, make me to know my doing,
Food I have not eaten, weeping was my nourishment,
Water I have not drunk, tears were my drink,
My heart has not been joyful nor my spirits glad.
Many are my sins, sorrowful my soul.
O my lady, make me to know my doing,
Make me a place of rest,
Cleanse my sin, lift up my face.
May my god, the lord of prayer, before thee set my prayer!
May my goddess, the lady of supplication, before thee set my supplication!
May the storm-god set my prayer before thee!

[The intercession of a number of gods is here invoked.]

Let thy eye rest graciously on me. . . .
Turn thy face graciously to me. . . .
Let thy heart be gentle, thy spirit mild. . . .

III

O lady, in sorrow of heart sore oppressed I cry to thee.
O lady, to thy servant favor show.
Let thy heart be favorable,

To thy servant full of sorrow show thy pity,
Turn to him thy face, accept his prayer.

IV

To thy servant with whom thou art angry graciously turn.
May the anger of my lord be appeased,
Appeased the god I know not!
The goddess I know, the goddess I know not,
The god who was angry with me,
The goddess who was angry with me be appeased!
The sin which I have committed I know not.
May my god name a gracious name,
My goddess name a gracious name,
The god I know, the god I know not
Name a gracious name,
The goddess I know, the goddess I know not
Name a gracious name!
Pure food I have not eaten,
Pure water I have not drunk,
The wrath of my god, though I knew it not, was my food,
The anger of my goddess, though I knew it not, cast me down.
O lord, many are my sins, great my misdeeds.

[These phrases are repeated many times.]

The lord has looked on me in anger,
The god has punished me in wrath,
The goddess was angry with me and hath brought me to sorrow.
I sought for help, but no one took my hand,
I wept, but no one to me came,
I cry aloud, there is none that hears me,
Sorrowful I lie on the ground, look not up.
To my merciful god I turn, I sigh aloud,
The feet of my goddess I kiss [.]
To the known and unknown god I loud do sigh,
To the known and unknown goddess I loud do sigh,
O lord, look on me, hear my prayer,
O goddess, look on me, hear my prayer.

. . . .

Men are perverse, nothing they know.
Men of every name, what do they know?
Do they good or ill, nothing they know.
O lord, cast not down thy servant!

Him, plunged into the flood, seize by the hand!
The sin I have committed turn thou to favor!
The evil I have done may the wind carry it away!
Tear in pieces my wrong-doings like a garment!
My god, my sins are seven times seven—forgive my sins!
My goddess, my sins are seven times seven—forgive my sins!
Known and unknown god, my sins are seven times seven—forgive my sins!
Known and unknown goddess, my sins are seven times seven—forgive my sins!
Forgive my sins, and I will humbly bow before thee.

V

May the lord, the mighty ruler Adar, announce my prayer to thee!
May the suppliant lady Nippur announce my prayer to thee!
May the lord of heaven and earth, the lord of Eridu, announce my prayer to thee!
The mother of the great house, the goddess Damkina, announce my prayer to thee!
May Marduk, the lord of Babylon, announce my prayer to thee!
May his consort, the exalted child of heaven and earth, announce my prayer to thee!
May the exalted minister, the god who names the good name, announce my prayer to thee!
May the bride, the first-born of the god, announce my prayer to thee!
May the god of storm-flood, the lord Harsaga, announce my prayer to thee!
May the gracious lady of the land announce my prayer to thee!

X. INSCRIPTION OF SENNACHERIB

(Taylor-cylinder, B. C. 701. Cf. 2 Kings xviii., xix.)

SENNACHERIB, the great king, the powerful king,
The king of the world, the king of Assyria,
The king of the four zones,
The wise shepherd, the favorite of the great gods,
The protector of justice, the lover of righteousness,
The giver of help, the aider of the weak,
The perfect hero, the stalwart warrior, the first of princes,
The destroyer of the rebellious, the destroyer of enemies—
Assur, the mighty rock, a kingdom without rival has granted me,

Over all who sit on sacred seats he has exalted my arms,
From the upper sea of the setting sun
To the lower sea of the rising sun,
All the blackheaded people he has cast beneath my feet,
The rebellious princes shun battle with me.
They forsook their dwellings; like a falcon
Which dwells in the clefts, they fled alone to an inaccessible place.

. . . .

To the city of Ekron I went,
The governors and princes who had done evil I slew,
I bound their corpses to poles around the city.
The inhabitants of the city who had done evil I reckoned as spoil;
To the rest who had done no wrong I spoke peace.
Padi, their king, I brought from Jerusalem,
King over them I made him.
The tribute of my lordship I laid upon him.
Hezekiah of Judah, who had not submitted to me,
Forty-six of his strong cities, small cities without number, I besieged.
Casting down the walls, advancing engines, by assault I took them.
Two hundred thousand, one hundred and fifty men and women, young and old,
Horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen, sheep,
I brought out and reckoned as spoil.
Hezekiah himself I shut up like a caged bird
In Jerusalem, his royal city,
The walls I fortified against him,
Whoever came out of the gates I turned him back.
His cities which I had plundered I divided from his land
And gave them to Mitinti, king of Ashdod,
To Padi, king of Ekron, and to Silbal, king of Gaza.
To the former tribute paid yearly
I added the tribute of alliance of my lordship and
Laid that upon him. Hezekiah himself
Was overwhelmed by the fear of the brightness of my lordship.
The Arabians and his other faithful warriors
Whom, for the defence of Jerusalem, his royal city,
He had brought in, fell into fear,
With thirty talents of gold and eight hundred talents of silver, precious stones,

Couches of ivory, thrones of ivory,
And his daughters, his women of the palace,
The young men and the young women, to Nineveh, the city of my lordship,
I caused to be brought after me, and he sent his ambassadors
To give tribute and to pay homage.

XI. INVOCATION TO THE GODDESS BELTIS

To Beltis, the great Lady, chief of heaven and earth,
Queen of all the gods, mighty in all the lands.
Honored is her festival among the Ishtars.
She surpasses her offspring in power.
She, the shining one, like her brother, the sun,
Enlightens Heaven and earth,
Mistress of the spirits of the underworld,
First-born of Anu, great among the gods,
Ruler over her enemies,
The seas she stirs up,
The wooded mountains tramples under foot.
Mistress of the spirits of upper air,
Goddess of battle and fight,
Without whom the heavenly temple
None would render obedience,
She, the bestower of strength, grants the desire of the faithful,
Prayers she hears, supplication receives, entreaty accepts.
Ishtar, the perfect light, all-powerful,
Who enlightens Heaven and earth,
Her name is proclaimed throughout all the lands,
Esarhaddon, king of lands, fear not.
To her it is good to pray.

XII. ORACLES OF ISHTAR OF ARBELA

(B. C. 680–668)

Esarhaddon, king of lands, fear not.
The lord, the spirit who speaks to thee
I speak to him, I have not kept it back.
Thine enemies, like the floods of Sivan
Before thee flee perpetually.
I the great goddess, Ishtar of Arbela
Have put thine enemies to flight.

Where are the words I spake to thee?
Thou hast not trusted them.
I, Ishtar of Arbela, thy foes
Into thy hands I give
In the van and by thy side I go, fear not
In the midst of thy princes thou art.
In the midst of my host I advance and rest.

O Esarhaddon, fear not.
Sixty great gods are with me to guard thee,
The Moon-god on thy right, the Sun-god on thy left.
Around thee stand the sixty great gods,
And make the centre firm.
Trust not to man, look thou to me
Honor me and fear not.
To Esarhaddon, my king,
Long days and length of years I give.
Thy throne beneath the heavens I have established;
In a golden dwelling thee I will guard in heaven
Guard like the diadem of my head.
The former word which I spake thou didst not trust,
But trust thou now this later word and glorify me,
When the day dawns bright complete thy sacrifice.
Pure food thou shalt eat, pure waters drink,
In thy palace thou shalt be pure.
Thy son, thy son's son the kingdom
By the blessing of Nergal shall rule.

XIII. AN ERECHITE'S LAMENT

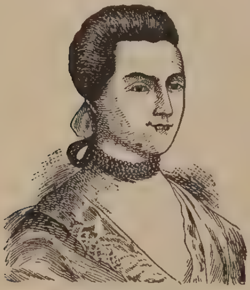
How long, O my Lady, shall the strong enemy hold thy sanctuary?
There is want in Erech, thy principal city;
Blood is flowing like water in Eulbar, the house of thy oracle;
He has kindled and poured out fire like hailstones on all thy lands.
My Lady, sorely am I fettered by misfortune;
My Lady, thou hast surrounded me, and brought me to grief.
The mighty enemy has smitten me down like a single reed.
Not wise myself, I cannot take counsel;
I mourn day and night like the fields.
I, thy servant, pray to thee.
Let thy heart take rest, let thy disposition be softened.

ABIGAIL ADAMS

(1744–1818)

BY LUCIA GILBERT RUNKLE

The Constitution of the State of Massachusetts, adopted in the year 1780, contains an article for the Encouragement of Literature, which, it declares, should be fostered because its influence is "to countenance and inculcate the principles of humanity and general benevolence, public and private charity, industry and frugality, honesty and punctuality in dealings, sincerity and good humor, and all social affections and generous sentiments among the people." In these words, as in a mirror, is reflected the Massachusetts of the eighteenth century, where households like the Adamses', the Warrens', the Otises', made the standard of citizenship. Six years before this remarkable document was framed, Abigail Adams had written to her husband, then engaged in nation-making in Philadelphia:—"I most sincerely wish that some more liberal plan might be laid and executed for the benefit of the rising generation, and that our new Constitution may be distinguished for encouraging learning and virtue." And he, spending his days and nights for his country, sacrificing his profession, giving up the hope of wealth, writes her:—"I believe my children will think that I might as well have labored a little, night and day, for their benefit. But I will tell them that I studied and labored to procure a free constitution of government for them to solace themselves under; and if they do not prefer this to ample fortune, to ease and elegance, they are not my children. They shall live upon thin diet, wear mean clothes, and work hard with cheerful hearts and free spirits, or they may be the children of the earth, or of no one, for me."



ABIGAIL ADAMS

In old Weymouth, one of those quiet Massachusetts towns, half-hidden among the umbrageous hills, where the meeting-house and the school-house rose before the settlers' cabins were built, where the one elm-shaded main street stretches its breadth between two lines of self-respecting, isolated frame houses, each with its grassy dooryard, its lilac bushes, its fresh-painted offices, its decorous wood-pile laid with architectural balance and symmetry, — there, in the dignified parsonage, on the 11th of November, 1744, was born to Parson William Smith and Elizabeth his wife, Abigail, the second of three beautiful daughters. Her mother was a Quincy, of a distinguished line, and *her* mother was a Norton, of a strain not less honorable. Nor were the Smiths unimportant.

In that day girls had little instruction. Abigail says of herself, in one of her letters:—«I never was sent to any school. Female education, in the best families, went no further than writing and arithmetic; in some few and rare instances, music and dancing. It was fashionable to ridicule female learning.» But the household was bookish. Her mother knew the «British Poets» and all the literature of Queen Anne's Augustan age. Her beloved grandmother Quincy, at Mount Wollaston, seems to have had both learning and wisdom, and to her father she owed the sense of fun, the shrewdness, the clever way of putting things which make her letters so delightful.

The good parson was skillful in adapting Scripture to special exigencies, and throughout the Revolution he astonished his hearers by the peculiar fitness of his texts to political uses. It is related of him that when his eldest daughter married Richard Cranch, he preached to his people from Luke, tenth chapter, forty-second verse: «And Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.» When, a year later, young John Adams came courting the brilliant Abigail, the parish, which assumed a right to be heard on the question of the destiny of the minister's daughter, grimly objected. He was upright, singularly abstemious, studious; but he was poor, he was the son of a small farmer, and she was of the gentry. He was hot-headed and somewhat tactless, and offended his critics. Worst of all, he was a lawyer, and the prejudice of colonial society reckoned a lawyer hardly honest. He won this most important of his cases, however, and Parson Smith's marriage sermon for the bride of nineteen was preached from the text, «For John came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and ye say, He hath a devil.»

For ten years Mrs. Adams seems to have lived a most happy life, either in Boston or Braintree, her greatest grief being the frequent absences of her husband on circuit. His letters to her are many and delightful, expressing again and again, in the somewhat formal phrases of the period, his affection and admiration. She wrote seldom, her household duties and the care of the children, of whom there were four in ten years, occupying her busy hands.

Meanwhile, the clouds were growing black in the political sky. Mr. Adams wrote arguments and appeals in the news journals over Latin signatures, papers of instructions to Representatives to the General Court, and legal portions of the controversy between the delegates and Governor Hutchinson. In all this work Mrs. Adams constantly sympathized and advised. In August, 1774, he went to Philadelphia as a delegate to a general council of the colonies called to concert measures for united action. And now begins the famous correspondence, which goes on for a period of nine years, which was intended to be seen only by the eyes of her husband, which she begs him, again and again, to destroy as not worth the keeping, yet which has given her a name and place among the world's most charming letter-writers.

Her courage, her cheerfulness, her patriotism, her patience never fail her. Braintree, where, with her little brood, she is to stay, is close to the British lines. Raids and foraging expeditions are imminent. Hopes of a peaceful settlement grow dim. «What course you can or will take,» she writes her husband, «is all wrapped in the bosom of futurity. Uncertainty and expectation leave the mind great scope. Did ever any kingdom or State regain its liberty, when once it was invaded, without bloodshed? I cannot think of it without horror. Yet we are told that all the misfortunes of Sparta were occasioned by their too great solicitude for present tranquillity, and, from an excessive love of peace, they neglected the means of making it sure and lasting. They ought to have reflected, says Polybius, that, ‹as there is nothing more desirable or advantageous than peace, when founded in justice and honor, so there is nothing more shameful, and at the same time more pernicious, when attained by bad measures, and purchased at the price of liberty.›»

Thus in the high Roman fashion she faces danger; yet her sense of fun never deserts her, and in the very next letter she writes, parodying her husband's documents:—«The drouth has been very severe. My poor cows will certainly prefer a petition to you, setting forth their grievances, and informing you that they have been deprived of their ancient privileges, whereby they are become great sufferers, and desiring that these may be restored to them. More especially as their living, by reason of the drouth, is all taken from them, and their property which they hold elsewhere is decaying, they humbly pray that you would consider them, lest hunger should break through stone walls.»

By midsummer the small hardships entailed by the British occupation of Boston were most vexatious. «We shall very soon have no coffee, nor sugar, nor pepper, but whortleberries and milk we are not obliged to commerce for,» she writes, and in letter after letter she begs for pins. Needles are desperately needed, but without pins how can domestic life go on, and not a pin in the province!

On the 14th of September she describes the excitement in Boston, the Governor mounting cannon on Beacon Hill, digging intrenchments on the Neck, planting guns, throwing up breastworks, encamping a regiment. In consequence of the powder being taken from Charlestown, she goes on to say, a general alarm spread through all the towns and was soon caught in Braintree. And then she describes one of the most extraordinary scenes in history. About eight o'clock on Sunday evening, she writes to her husband, at least two hundred men, preceded by a horse-cart, passed by her door in dead silence, and marched down to the powder-house, whence they took out the town's powder, because they dared not trust it where there were so many Tories, carried it into the other parish, and there secreted it. On their way they captured a notorious «King's man,» and found on him two warrants aimed at the Commonwealth. When their patriotic trust was discharged, they turned their attention to the trembling Briton. Profoundly excited and indignant though they were, they never thought of mob violence, but, true to the inherited instincts of their race, they resolved themselves into a public meeting! The hostile warrants being produced and exhibited, it was put to a vote whether they should be burned or preserved. The majority voted for burning them. Then the two hundred gathered in a circle round the single lantern, and maintained a rigid silence while the offending papers were consumed. That done—the blazing eyes in that grim circle of patriots watching the blazing writs—«they called a vote whether they should huzza; but, it being Sunday evening, it passed in the negative!»

Only in the New England of John Winthrop and the Mathers, of John Quincy and the Adamses, would such a scene have been possible: a land of self-conquest and self-control, of a deep love of the public welfare and a willingness to take trouble for a public object.

A little later Mrs. Adams writes her husband that there has been a conspiracy among the negroes, though it has been kept quiet. «I wish most sincerely,» she adds, «that there was not a slave in the province. It always appeared a most iniquitous scheme to me—to fight ourselves for what we are daily robbing and plundering from those who have as good a right to freedom as we have.»

Nor were the sympathies of this clever logician confined to the slaves. A month or two before the Declaration of Independence was made she writes her constructive statesman:—«I long to hear that you have declared an independence. And by the way, in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands! Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could! If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation. That your sex are naturally tyrannical is a truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute; but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of master for the more tender and endearing one of friend. Why, then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and the lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity? Men of sense in all ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your sex. Regard us, then, as being placed by Providence under your protection; and in imitation of the Supreme Being, make use of that power only for our happiness,"—a declaration of principles which the practical housewife follows up by saying:—"I have not yet attempted making saltpetre, but after soap-making, believe I shall make the experiment. I find as much as I can do to manufacture clothing for my family, which would else be naked. I have lately seen a small manuscript describing the proportions of the various sorts of powder fit for cannon, small arms, and pistols. If it would be of any service your way, I will get it transcribed and send it to you."

She is interested in everything, and she writes about everything in the same whole-hearted way,—farming, paper money, the making of molasses from corn-stalks, the new remedy of inoculation, 'Common Sense' and its author, the children's handwriting, the state of Harvard College, the rate of taxes, the most helpful methods of enlistment, Chesterfield's Letters, the town elections, the higher education of women, and the getting of homespun enough for Mr. Adams's new suit.

She manages, with astonishing skill, to keep the household in comfort. She goes through trials of sickness, death, agonizing suspense, and ever with the same heroic cheerfulness, that her anxious husband may be spared the pangs which she endures. When he is sent to France and Holland, she accepts the new parting as another service pledged to her country. She sees her darling boy of ten go with his father, aware that at the best she must bear months of silence, knowing that they may perish at sea or fall into the hands of privateers; but she writes with indomitable cheer, sending the lad tender letters of good advice, a little didactic to modern taste, but throbbing with affection. "Dear as you are to me," says this tender mother, "I would much rather you should have found your grave in the ocean you have crossed than see you an immoral, profligate, or graceless child."

It was the lot of this country parson's daughter to spend three years in London as wife of the first American minister, to see her husband Vice-President of the United States for eight years and President for four, and to greet her son as the eminent Monroe's valued

Secretary of State, though she died, «seventy-four years young,» before he became President. She could not, in any station, be more truly a lady than when she made soap and chopped kindling on her Braintree farm. At Braintree she was no more simply modest than at the Court of St. James or in the Executive Mansion. Her letters exactly reflect her ardent, sincere, energetic nature. She shows a charming delight when her husband tells her that his affairs could not possibly be better managed than she manages them, and that she shines not less as a statesman than as a farmeress. And though she was greatly admired and complimented, no praise so pleased her as his declaration that for all the ingratitude, calumnies, and misunderstandings that he had endured,—and they were numberless,—her perfect comprehension of him had been his sufficient compensation.

Lucia Gilbert Runkle

TO HER HUSBAND

Braintree, May 24th, 1775.

My Dearest Friend:

. . . .

Our house has been, upon this alarm, in the same scene of confusion that it was upon the former. Soldiers coming in for a lodging, for breakfast, for supper, for drink, etc. Sometimes refugees from Boston, tired and fatigued, seek an asylum for a day, a night, a week. You can hardly imagine how we live; yet—

«To the houseless child of want,
Our doors are open still;
And though our portions are but scant,
We give them with good will.»

My best wishes attend you, both for your health and happiness, and that you may be directed into the wisest and best measures for our safety and the security of our posterity. I wish you were nearer to us: we know not what a day will bring forth, nor what distress one hour may throw us into. Hitherto I have been able to maintain a calmness and presence of mind, and hope I shall, let the exigency of the time be what it will. Adieu, breakfast calls.

Your affectionate Portia.

Weymouth, June 15th, 1775.

I hope we shall see each other again, and rejoice together in happier days; the little ones are well, and send duty to papa. Don't fail of letting me hear from you by every opportunity. Every line is like a precious relic of the saints.

I have a request to make of you; something like the barrel of sand, I suppose you will think it, but really of much more importance to me. It is, that you would send out Mr. Bass, and purchase me a bundle of pins and put them in your trunk for me. The cry for pins is so great that what I used to buy for seven shillings and sixpence are now twenty shillings, and not to be had for that. A bundle contains six thousand, for which I used to give a dollar; but if you can procure them for fifty shillings, or three pounds, pray let me have them. I am, with the tenderest regard, Your Portia.

Braintree, June 18th, 1775.

My Dearest Friend:

The day — perhaps the decisive day is come, on which the fate of America depends. My bursting heart must find vent at my pen. I have just heard that our dear friend, Dr. Warren, is no more, but fell gloriously fighting for his country, saying, "Better to die honorably in the field than ignominiously hang upon the gallows." Great is our loss. He has distinguished himself in every engagement by his courage and fortitude, by animating the soldiers, and leading them on by his own example. A particular account of these dreadful but, I hope, glorious days, will be transmitted you, no doubt, in the exactest manner.

"The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; but the God of Israel is He that giveth strength and power unto His people. Trust in Him at all times, ye people: pour out your hearts before Him; God is a refuge for us." Charlestown is laid in ashes. The battle began upon our intrenchments upon Bunker's Hill, Saturday morning about three o'clock, and has not ceased yet, and it is now three o'clock Sabbath afternoon.

It is expected they will come out over the Neck to-night, and a dreadful battle must ensue. Almighty God, cover the heads of our countrymen, and be a shield to our dear friends! How many have fallen we know not. The constant roar of the cannon is so distressing that we cannot eat, drink, or sleep. May we be supported and sustained in the dreadful conflict. I shall tarry here till it is thought unsafe by my friends, and then I have secured myself a retreat at your brother's, who has kindly offered me part of his house. I cannot compose myself to write any further at present. I will add more as I hear further.

Your PORTIA.

BRAINTREE, November 27th, 1775.

COLONEL WARREN returned last week to Plymouth, so that I shall not hear anything from you until he goes back again, which will not be till the last of this month. He damped my spirits greatly by telling me that the court had prolonged your stay another month. I was pleasing myself with the thought that you would soon be upon your return. It is in vain to repine. I hope the public will reap what I sacrifice.

I wish I knew what mighty things were fabricating. If a form of government is to be established here, what one will be assumed? Will it be left to our Assemblies to choose one? And will not many men have many minds? And shall we not run into dissensions among ourselves?

I am more and more convinced that man is a dangerous creature; and that power, whether vested in many or a few, is ever grasping, and, like the grave, cries, "Give, give!" The great fish swallow up the small; and he who is most strenuous for the rights of the people, when vested with power, is as eager after the prerogatives of government. You tell me of degrees of perfection to which human nature is capable of arriving, and I believe it, but at the same time lament that our admiration should arise from the scarcity of the instances.

The building up a great empire, which was only hinted at by my correspondent, may now, I suppose, be realized even by the unbelievers; yet will not ten thousand difficulties arise in the formation of it? The reins of government have been so long slackened that I fear the people will not quietly submit to those restraints which are necessary for the peace and security of the community. If we separate from Britain, what code of laws will be established? How shall we be governed so as to retain our liberties? Can any government be free which is not administered by general stated laws? Who shall frame these laws? Who will give them force and energy? It is true, your resolutions, as a body, have hitherto had the force of laws; but will they continue to have?

When I consider these things, and the prejudices of people in favor of ancient customs and regulations, I feel anxious for the fate of our monarchy, or democracy, or whatever is to take place. I soon get lost in the labyrinth of perplexities; but, whatever occurs, may justice and righteousness be the stability of our times, and order arise out of confusion. Great difficulties may be surmounted by patience and perseverance.

I believe I have tired you with politics. As to news, we have not any at all. I shudder at the approach of winter, when I think I am to remain desolate.

I must bid you good-night; 'tis late for me, who am much of an invalid. I was disappointed last week in receiving a packet by post, and, upon unsealing it, finding only four newspapers. I think you are more cautious than you need be. All letters, I believe, have come safe to hand. I have sixteen from you, and wish I had as many more. Your PORTIA.

BRAINTREE, April 20th, 1777.

. . . .

THERE is a general cry against the merchants, against monopolizers, etc., who, 'tis said, have created a partial scarcity. That a scarcity prevails of every article, not only of luxury but even the necessaries of life, is a certain fact. Everything bears an exorbitant price. The Act, which was in some measure regarded and stemmed the torrent of oppression, is now no more heeded than if it had never been made. Indian corn at five shillings; rye, eleven and twelve shillings, but scarcely any to be had even at that price; beef, eightpence; veal, sixpence and eightpence; butter, one and sixpence; mutton, none; lamb, none; pork, none; mean sugar, four pounds per hundred; molasses, none; cotton-wool, none; New England rum, eight shillings per gallon; coffee, two and sixpence per pound; chocolate, three shillings.

What can be done? Will gold and silver remedy this evil? By your accounts of board, housekeeping, etc., I fancy you are not better off than we are here. I live in hopes that we see the most difficult time we have to experience. Why is Carolina so much better furnished than any other State, and at so reasonable prices? Your PORTIA.

BRAINTREE, June 8th, 1779.

SIX months have already elapsed since I heard a syllable from you or my dear son, and five since I have had one single opportunity of conveying a line to you. Letters of various dates have lain months at the Navy Board, and a packet and frigate, both ready to sail at an hour's warning, have been months waiting the orders of Congress. They no doubt have their reasons, or ought to have, for detaining them. I must patiently wait their motions, however painful it is; and that it is so, your own feelings will testify. Yet I know not but you are less a sufferer than you would be to hear from us, to know our distresses, and yet be unable to relieve them. The universal cry for bread, to a humane heart, is painful beyond description, and the great price demanded and given for it verifies that pathetic passage of Sacred Writ, "All that a man hath will he give for his life." Yet He who miraculously fed a multitude with five loaves and two fishes has graciously interposed in our favor, and delivered many of the enemy's supplies into our hands, so that our distresses have been mitigated. I have been able as yet to supply my own family, sparingly, but at a price that would astonish you. Corn is sold at four dollars, hard money, per bushel, which is equal to eighty at the rate of exchange.

Labor is at eight dollars per day, and in three weeks it will be at twelve, it is probable, or it will be more stable than anything else. Goods of all kinds are at such a price that I hardly dare mention it. Linens are sold at twenty dollars per yard; the most ordinary sort of calicoes at thirty and forty; broadcloths at forty pounds per yard; West India goods full as high; molasses at twenty dollars per gallon; sugar, four dollars per pound; Bohea tea at forty dollars; and our own produce in proportion; butcher's meat at six and eight shillings per pound; board at fifty and sixty dollars per week; rates high. That, I suppose, you will rejoice at; so would I, did it remedy the evil. I pay five hundred dollars, and a new Continental rate has just appeared, my proportion of which will be two hundred more. I have come to this determination,—to sell no more bills, unless I can procure hard money for them, although I shall be obliged to allow a discount. If I sell for paper, I throw away more than half, so rapid is the depreciation; nor do I know that it will be received long. I sold a bill to Blodget at five for one, which was looked upon as high at that time. The week after I received it, two emissions were taken out of circulation, and the greater part of what I had proved to be of that sort; so that those to whom I was indebted are obliged to wait, and before it becomes due, or is exchanged, it will be good for—as much as it will fetch, which will be nothing, if it goes on as it has done for this three months past. I will not tire your patience any longer. I have not drawn any further upon you. I mean to wait the return of the Alliance, which with longing eyes I look for. God grant it may bring me comfortable tidings from my dear, dear friend, whose welfare is so essential to my happiness that it is entwined around my heart, and cannot be impaired or separated from it without rending it asunder. . . .

I cannot say that I think our affairs go very well here. Our currency seems to be the source of all our evils. We cannot fill up our Continental army by means of it. No bounty will prevail with them. What can be done with it? It will sink in less than a year. The advantage the enemy daily gains over us is owing to this. Most truly did you prophesy, when you said that they would do all the mischief in their power with the forces they had here.

My tenderest regards ever attend you. In all places and situations, know me to be ever, ever yours.

Auteuil, 5th September, 1784.

My Dear Sister:

Auteuil is a village four miles distant from Paris, and one from Passy. The house we have taken is large, commodious, and agreeably situated near the woods of Boulogne, which belong to the King, and which Mr Adams calls his park, for he walks an hour or two every day in them. The house is much larger than we have need of; upon occasion, forty beds may be made in it. I fancy it must be very cold in winter. There are few houses with the privilege which this enjoys, that of having the salon, as it is called, the apartment where we receive company, upon the first floor. This room is very elegant, and about a third larger than General Warren's hall. The dining-room is upon the right hand, and the salon upon the left, of the entry, which has large glass doors opposite to each other, one opening into the court, as they call it, the other into a large and beautiful garden. Out of the dining-room you pass through an entry into the kitchen, which is rather small for so large a house. In this entry are stairs which you ascend, at the top of which is a long gallery fronting the street, with six windows, and opposite to each window you open into the chambers, which all look into the garden.

But with an expense of thirty thousand livres in looking-glasses, there is no table in the house better than an oak board, nor a carpet belonging to the house. The floors I abhor, made of red tiles in the shape of Mrs. Quincy's floor-cloth tiles. These floors will by no means bear water, so that the method of cleaning them is to have them waxed, and then a manservant with foot brushes drives round your room, dancing here and there like a Merry Andrew. This is calculated to take from your foot every atom of dirt, and leave the room in a few moments as he found it. The house must be exceedingly cold in winter. The dining-rooms, of which you make no other use, are laid with small stones, like the red tiles for shape and size. The servants' apartments are generally upon the first floor, and the stairs which you commonly have to ascend to get into the family apartments are so dirty that I have been obliged to hold up my clothes as though I was passing through a cow-yard.

I have been but little abroad. It is customary in this country for strangers to make the first visit. As I cannot speak the language, I think I should make rather an awkward figure. I have dined abroad several times with Mr. Adams's particular friends, the Abbés, who are very polite and civil,—three sensible and worthy men. The Abbé de Mably has lately published a book, which he has dedicated to Mr. Adams. This gentleman is nearly eighty years old; the Abbé Chalut, seventy-five; and Arnoux about fifty, a fine sprightly man, who takes great pleasure in obliging his friends. Their apartments were really nice. I have dined once at Dr. Franklin's, and once at Mr. Barclay's, our consul, who has a very agreeable woman for his wife, and where I feel like being with a friend. Mrs. Barclay has assisted me in my purchases, gone with me to different shops, etc. To-morrow I am to dine at Monsieur Grand's; but I have really felt so happy within doors, and am so pleasingly situated, that I have had little inclination to change the scene. I have not been to one public amusement as yet, not even the opera, though we have one very near us.

You may easily suppose I have been fully employed, beginning housekeeping anew, and arranging my family to our no small expenses and trouble; for I have had bed-linen and table-linen to purchase and make, spoons and forks to get made of silver, — three dozen of each, — besides tea furniture, china for the table, servants to procure, etc. The expense of living abroad I always supposed to be high, but my ideas were nowise adequate to the thing. I could have furnished myself in the town of Boston with everything I have, twenty or thirty per cent. cheaper than I have been able to do it here. Everything which will bear the name of elegant is imported from England, and if you will have it, you must pay for it, duties and all. I cannot get a dozen handsome wineglasses under three guineas, nor a pair of small decanters for less than a guinea and a half. The only gauze fit to wear is English, at a crown a yard; so that really a guinea goes no further than a copper with us. For this house, garden, stables, etc., we give two hundred guineas a year. Wood is two guineas and a half per cord; coal, six livres the basket of about two bushels; this article of firing we calculate at one hundred guineas a year. The difference between coming upon this negotiation to France, and remaining at the Hague, where the house was already furnished at the expense of a thousand pounds sterling, will increase the expense here to six or seven hundred guineas; at a time, too, when Congress has cut off five hundred guineas from what they have heretofore given. For our coachman and horses alone (Mr. Adams purchased a coach in England) we give fifteen guineas a month. It is the policy of this country to oblige you to a certain number of servants, and one will not touch what belongs to the business of another, though he or she has time enough to perform the whole. In the first place, there is a coachman who does not an individual thing but attend to the carriages and horses; then the gardener, who has business enough; then comes the cook; then the *maître d'hotel*, — his business is to purchase articles in the family, and oversee that nobody cheats but himself; a *valet de chambre*, — John serves in this capacity; a *femme de chambre*, — Esther serves for this, and is worth a dozen others; a *coiffeuse*, — for this place I have a French girl about nineteen, whom I have been upon the point of turning away, because madam will not brush a chamber: «it is not de fashion, it is not her business.» I would not have kept her a day longer, but found, upon inquiry, that I could not better myself, and hair-dressing here is very expensive unless you keep such a madam in the house. She sews tolerably well, so I make her as useful as I can. She is more particularly devoted to mademoiselle. Esther diverted me yesterday evening by telling me that she heard her go muttering by her chamber door, after she had been assisting Abby in dressing. « Ah, mon Dieu, 'tis provoking »—(she talks a little English).—« Why, what is the matter, Pauline: what is provoking ? » —« Why, Mademoiselle look so pretty, I so *mauvais.* » There is another indispensable servant, who is called a *frotteur:* his business is to rub the floors.

We have a servant who acts as *maître d'hotel*, whom I like at present, and who is so very gracious as to act as footman too, to save the expense of another servant, upon condition that we give him a gentleman's suit of clothes in lieu of a livery. Thus, with seven servants and hiring a charwoman upon occasion of company, we may possibly make out to keep house; with less, we should be hooted at as ridiculous, and could not entertain any company. To tell this in our own country would be considered as extravagance; but would they send a person here in a public character to be a public jest? At lodgings in Paris last year, during Mr. Adams's negotiation for a peace, it was as expensive to him as it is now at housekeeping, without half the accommodations.

Washing is another expensive article: the servants are all allowed theirs, besides their wages; our own costs us a guinea a week. I have become steward and bookkeeper, determined to know with accuracy what our expenses are, to prevail with Mr. Adams to return to America if he finds himself straitened, as I think he must be. Mr. Jay went home because he could not support his family here with the whole salary; what then can be done, curtailed as it now is, with the additional expense? Mr. Adams is determined to keep as little company as he possibly can; but some entertainments we must make, and it is no unusual thing for them to amount to fifty or sixty guineas at a time. More is to be performed by way of negotiation, many times, at one of these entertainments, than at twenty serious conversations; but the policy of our country has been, and still is, to be penny-wise and pound-foolish. We stand in sufficient need of economy, and in the curtailment of other salaries I suppose they thought it absolutely necessary to cut off their foreign ministers. But, my own interest apart, the system is bad; for that nation which degrades their own ministers by obliging them to live in narrow circumstances, cannot expect to be held in high estimation themselves. We spend no evenings abroad, make no suppers, attend very few public entertainments,—or spectacles, as they are called,—and avoid every expense that is not held indispensable. Yet I cannot but think it hard that a gentleman who has devoted so great a part of his life to the service of the public, who has been the means, in a great measure, of procuring such extensive territories to his country, who saved their fisheries, and who is still laboring to procure them further advantages, should find it necessary so cautiously to calculate his pence, for fear of overrunning them. I will add one more expense. There is now a court mourning, and every foreign minister, with his family, must go into mourning for a Prince of eight years old, whose father is an ally to the King of France. This mourning is ordered by the Court, and is to be worn eleven days only. Poor Mr. Jefferson had to hie away for a tailor to get a whole black-silk suit made up in two days; and at the end of eleven days, should another death happen, he will be obliged to have a new suit of mourning, of cloth, because that is the season when silk must be left off. We may groan and scold, but these are expenses which cannot be avoided; for fashion is the deity every one worships in this country, and from the highest to the lowest, you must submit. Even poor John and Esther had no comfort among the servants, being constantly the subjects of ridicule, until we were obliged to direct them to have their hair dressed. Esther had several crying fits upon the occasion, that she should be forced to be so much of a fool; but there was no way to keep them from being trampled upon but this, and now that they are *à la mode de Paris*, they are much respected. To be out of fashion is more criminal than to be seen in a state of nature, to which the Parisians are not averse.

Auteuil, near Paris, 10th May, 1785.

Did you ever, my dear Betsey, see a person in real life such as your imagination formed of Sir Charles Grandison? The Baron de Staël, the Swedish Ambassador, comes nearest to that character, in his manners and personal appearance, of any gentleman I ever saw. The first time I saw him I was prejudiced in his favor, for his countenance commands your good opinion: it is animated, intelligent, sensible, affable, and without being perfectly beautiful, is most perfectly agreeable; add to this a fine figure, and who can fail in being charmed with the Baron de Staël? He lives in a grand hotel, and his suite of apartments, his furniture, and his table, are the most elegant of anything I have seen. Although you dine upon plate in every noble house in France, I cannot say that you may see your face in it; but here the whole furniture of the table was burnished, and shone with regal splendor. Seventy thousand livres in plate will make no small figure; and that is what his Majesty gave him. The dessert was served on the richest china, with knives, forks, and spoons of gold. As you enter his apartments, you pass through files of servants into his ante-chamber, in which is a throne covered with green velvet, upon which is a chair of state, over which hangs the picture of his royal master. These thrones are common to all ambassadors of the first order, as they are immediate representatives of the king. Through this ante-chamber you pass into the grand salon, which is elegantly adorned with architecture, a beautiful lustre hanging from the middle. Settees, chairs, and hangings of the richest silk, embroidered with gold; marble slabs upon fluted pillars, round which wreaths of artificial flowers in gold entwine. It is usual to find in all houses of fashion, as in this, several dozens of chairs, all of which have stuffed backs and cushions, standing in double rows round the rooms. The dining-room was equally beautiful, being hung with Gobelin tapestry, the colors and figures of which resemble the most elegant painting. In this room were hair-bottom mahogany-backed chairs, and the first I have seen since I came to France. Two small statues of a Venus de Medicis, and a Venus de —— (ask Miss Paine for the other name), were upon the mantelpiece. The latter, however, was the most modest of the kind, having something like a loose robe thrown partly over her. From the Swedish Ambassador's we went to visit the Duchess d'Enville, who is mother to the Duke de Rochefoucault. We found the old lady sitting in an easy-chair; around her sat a circle of Academicians, and by her side a young lady. Your uncle presented us, and the old lady rose, and, as usual, gave us a salute. As she had no paint, I could put up with it; but when she approached your cousin I could think of nothing but Death taking hold of Hebe. The duchess is near eighty, very tall and lean. She was dressed in a silk chemise, with very large sleeves, coming half-way down her arm, a large cape, no stays, a black-velvet girdle round her waist, some very rich lace in her chemise, round her neck, and in her sleeves; but the lace was not sufficient to cover the upper part of her neck, which old Time had harrowed; she had no cap on, but a little gauze bonnet, which did not reach her ears, and tied under her chin, her venerable white hairs in full view. The dress of old women and young girls in this country is *detestable*, to speak in the French style; the latter at the age of seven being clothed exactly like a woman of twenty, and the former have such a fantastical appearance that I cannot endure it. The old lady has all the vivacity of a young one. She is the most learned woman in France; her house is the resort of all men of literature, with whom she converses upon the most abstruse subjects. She is of one of the most ancient, as well as the richest families in the kingdom. She asked very archly when Dr. Franklin was going to America. Upon being told, says she, "I have heard that he is a prophet there;" alluding to that text of Scripture, "A prophet is not without honor," etc. It was her husband who commanded the fleet which once spread such terror in our country.

TO HER SISTER

LONDON, Friday, 24th July 1784.

My Dear Sister:

I AM not a little surprised to find dress, unless upon public occasions, so little regarded here. The gentlemen are very plainly dressed, and the ladies much more so than with us. 'Tis true, you must put a hoop on and have your hair dressed; but a common straw hat, no cap, with only a ribbon upon the crown, is thought dress sufficient to go into company. Muslins are much in taste; no silks but lutestrings worn; but send not to London for any article you want: you may purchase anything you can name much lower in Boston. I went yesterday into Cheapside to purchase a few articles, but found everything higher than in Boston. Silks are in a particular manner so; they say, when they are exported, there is a drawback upon them, which makes them lower with us. Our country, alas, our country! they are extravagant to astonishment in entertainments compared with what Mr. Smith and Mr. Storer tell me of this. You will not find at a gentleman's table more than two dishes of meat, though invited several days beforehand. Mrs. Atkinson went out with me yesterday, and Mrs. Hay, to the shops. I returned and dined with Mrs. Atkinson, by her invitation the evening before, in company with Mr. Smith, Mrs. Hay, Mr. Appleton. We had a turbot, a soup, and a roast leg of lamb, with a cherry pie. . . .

The wind has prevented the arrival of the post. The city of London is pleasanter than I expected; the buildings more regular, the streets much wider, and more sunshine than I thought to have found: but this, they tell me, is the pleasantest season to be in the city. At my lodgings I am as quiet as at any place in Boston; nor do I feel as if it could be any other place than Boston. Dr. Clark visits us every day; says he cannot feel at home anywhere else: declares he has not seen a handsome woman since he came into the city; that every old woman looks like Mrs. H——, and every young one like—like the D—l. They paint here nearly as much as in France, but with more art. The head-dress disfigures them in the eyes of an American. I have seen many ladies, but not one elegant one since I came; there is not to me that neatness in their appearance which you see in our ladies.

The American ladies are much admired here by the gentlemen, I am told, and in truth I wonder not at it. Oh, my country, my country! preserve, preserve the little purity and simplicity of manners you yet possess. Believe me, they are jewels of inestimable value; the softness, peculiarly characteristic of our sex, and which is so pleasing to the gentlemen, is wholly laid aside here for the masculine attire and manners of Amazonians.

London, Bath Hotel, Westminster, 24th June, 1785.

My Dear Sister:

I have been here a month without writing a single line to my American friends. On or about the twenty-eighth of May we reached London, and expected to have gone into our old quiet lodgings at the Adelphi; but we found every hotel full. The sitting of Parliament, the birthday of the King, and the famous celebration of the music of Handel, at Westminster Abbey, had drawn together such a concourse of people that we were glad to get into lodgings at the moderate price of a guinea per day, for two rooms and two chambers, at the Bath Hotel, Westminster, Piccadilly, where we yet are. This being the Court end of the city, it is the resort of a vast concourse of carriages. It is too public and noisy for pleasure; but necessity is without law. The ceremony of presentation, upon one week to the King, and the next to the Queen, was to take place, after which I was to prepare for mine. It is customary, upon presentation, to receive visits from all the foreign ministers; so that we could not exchange our lodgings for more private ones, as we might and should, had we been only in a private character. The foreign ministers and several English lords and earls have paid their compliments here, and all hitherto is civil and polite. I was a fortnight, all the time I could get, looking at different houses, but could not find any one fit to inhabit under £200, beside the taxes, which mount up to £50 or £60. At last my good genius carried me to one in Grosvenor Square, which was not let, because the person who had the care of it could let it only for the remaining lease, which was one year and three-quarters. The price, which is not quite two hundred pounds, the situation, and all together, induced us to close the bargain, and I have prevailed upon the person who lets it to paint two rooms, which will put it into decent order; so that, as soon as our furniture comes, I shall again commence housekeeping. Living at a hotel is, I think, more expensive than housekeeping, in proportion to what one has for his money. We have never had more than two dishes at a time upon our table, and have not pretended to ask any company, and yet we live at a greater expense than twenty-five guineas per week. The wages of servants, horse hire, house rent, and provisions are much dearer here than in France. Servants of various sorts, and for different departments, are to be procured; their characters are to be inquired into, and this I take upon me, even to the coachman. You can hardly form an idea how much I miss my son on this, as well as on many other accounts; but I cannot bear to trouble Mr. Adams with anything of a domestic kind, who, from morning until evening, has sufficient to occupy all his time. You can have no idea of the petitions, letters, and private applications for assistance, which crowd our doors. Every person represents his case as dismal. Some may really be objects of compassion, and some we assist; but one must have an inexhaustible purse to supply them all. Besides, there are so many gross impositions practiced, as we have found in more instances than one, that it would take the whole of a person's time to trace all their stories. Many pretend to have been American soldiers, some have served as officers. A most glaring instance of falsehood, however, Colonel Smith detected in a man of these pretensions, who sent to Mr. Adams from the King's Bench prison, and modestly desired five guineas; a qualified cheat, but evidently a man of letters and abilities: but if it is to continue in this way, a galley slave would have an easier task.

The Tory venom has begun to spit itself forth in the public papers, as I expected, bursting with envy that an American minister should be received here with the same marks of attention, politeness, and civility, which are shown to the ministers of any other power. When a minister delivers his credentials to the King, it is always in his private closet, attended only by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, which is called a private audience, and the minister presented makes some little address to his Majesty, and the same ceremony to the Queen, whose reply was in these words: "Sir, I thank you for your civility to me and my family, and I am glad to see you in this country;" then she very politely inquired whether he had got a house yet. The answer of his Majesty was much longer; but I am not at liberty to say more respecting it, than that it was civil and polite, and that his Majesty said he was glad the choice of his country had fallen upon him. The news-liars know nothing of the matter; they represent it just to answer their purpose. Last Thursday, Colonel Smith was presented at Court, and to-morrow, at the Queen's circle, my ladyship and your niece make our compliments. There is no other presentation in Europe in which I should feel as much as in this. Your own reflections will easily suggest the reasons.

I have received a very friendly and polite visit from the Countess of Effingham. She called, and not finding me at home, left a card. I returned her visit, but was obliged to do it by leaving my card too, as she was gone out of town; but when her ladyship returned, she sent her compliments and word that if agreeable she would take a dish of tea with me, and named her day. She accordingly came, and appeared a very polite, sensible woman. She is about forty, a good person, though a little masculine, elegant in her appearance, very easy and social. The Earl of Effingham is too well remembered by America to need any particular recital of his character. His mother is first lady to the Queen. When her ladyship took leave, she desired I would let her know the day I would favor her with a visit, as she should be loath to be absent. She resides, in summer, a little distance from town. The Earl is a member of Parliament, which obliges him now to be in town, and she usually comes with him, and resides at a hotel a little distance from this.

I find a good many ladies belonging to the Southern States here, many of whom have visited me; I have exchanged visits with several, yet neither of us have met. The custom is, however, here much more agreeable than in France, for it is as with us: the stranger is first visited.

The ceremony of presentation here is considered as indispensable. There are four minister-plenipotentiaries' ladies here; but one ambassador, and he has no lady. In France, the ladies of ambassadors only are presented. One is obliged here to attend the circles of the Queen, which are held in summer once a fortnight, but once a week the rest of the year; and what renders it exceedingly expensive is, that you cannot go twice the same season in the same dress, and a Court dress you cannot make use of anywhere else. I directed my mantuamaker to let my dress be elegant, but plain as I could possibly appear, with decency; accordingly, it is white lutestring, covered and full trimmed with white crape, festooned with lilac ribbon and mock point lace, over a hoop of enormous extent; there is only a narrow train of about three yards in length to the gown waist, which is put into a ribbon upon the left side, the Queen only having her train borne. Ruffle cuffs for married ladies, treble lace lappets, two white plumes, and a blond lace handkerchief. This is my rigging. I should have mentioned two pearl pins in my hair, earrings and necklace of the same kind.

THURSDAY MORNING.

My head is dressed for St. James's, and in my opinion looks very tasty. While my daughter's is undergoing the same operation, I set myself down composedly to write you a few lines. "Well," methinks I hear Betsey and Lucy say, "what is cousin's dress?" White, my dear girls, like your aunt's, only differently trimmed and ornamented: her train being wholly of white crape, and trimmed with white ribbon; the petticoat, which is the most showy part of the dress, covered and drawn up in what are called festoons, with light wreaths of beautiful flowers; the sleeves white crape, drawn over the silk, with a row of lace round the sleeve near the shoulder, another half-way down the arm, and a third upon the top of the ruffle, a little flower stuck between; a kind of hat-cap, with three large feathers and a bunch of flowers; a wreath of flowers upon the hair. Thus equipped, we go in our own carriage, and Mr. Adams and Colonel Smith in his. But I must quit my pen to put myself in order for the ceremony, which begins at two o'clock. When I return, I will relate to you my reception; but do not let it circulate, as there may be persons eager to catch at everything, and as much given to misrepresentation as here. I would gladly be excused the ceremony.

FRIDAY MORNING.

Congratulate me, my dear sister: it is over. I was too much fatigued to write a line last evening. At two o'clock we went to the circle, which is in the drawing-room of the Queen. We passed through several apartments, lined as usual with spectators upon these occasions. Upon entering the ante-chamber, the Baron de Lynden, the Dutch Minister, who has been often here, came and spoke with me. A Count Sarsfield, a French nobleman, with whom I was acquainted, paid his compliments. As I passed into the drawing-room, Lord Carmarthen and Sir Clement Cotterel Dormer were presented to me. Though they had been several times here, I had never seen them before. The Swedish and the Polish Ministers made their compliments, and several other gentlemen; but not a single lady did I know until the Countess of Effingham came, who was very civil. There were three young ladies, daughters of the Marquis of Lothian, who were to be presented at the same time, and two brides. We were placed in a circle round the drawing-room, which was very full; I believe two hundred persons present. Only think of the task! The royal family have to go round to every person and find small talk enough to speak to them all, though they very prudently speak in a whisper, so that only the person who stands next to you can hear what is said. The King enters the room and goes round to the right; the Queen and Princesses to the left. The lord-in-waiting presents you to the King; and the lady-in-waiting does the same to her Majesty. The King is a personable man; but, my dear sister, he has a certain countenance, which you and I have often remarked: a red face and white eyebrows. The Queen has a similar countenance, and the numerous royal family confirm the observation. Persons are not placed according to their rank in the drawing-room, but promiscuously; and when the King comes in, he takes persons as they stand. When he came to me, Lord Onslow said, « Mrs. Adams; » upon which I drew off my right-hand glove, and his Majesty saluted my left cheek; then asked me if I had taken a walk to-day. I could have told his Majesty that I had been all the morning preparing to wait upon him; but I replied, « No, Sire. » « Why, don't you love walking? » says he. I answered that I was rather indolent in that respect. He then bowed, and passed on. It was more than two hours after this before it came to my turn to be presented to the Queen. The circle was so large that the company were four hours standing. The Queen was evidently embarrassed when I was presented to her. I had disagreeable feelings, too. She, however, said, « Mrs. Adams, have you got into your house? Pray, how do you like the situation of it? » While the Princess Royal looked compassionate, and asked me if I was not much fatigued; and observed, that it was a very full drawing-room. Her sister, who came next, Princess Augusta, after having asked your niece if she was ever in England before, and her answering « Yes, » inquired of me how long ago, and supposed it was when she was very young. All this is said with much affability, and the ease and freedom of old acquaintance. The manner in which they make their tour round the room is, first, the Queen, the lady-in-waiting behind her, holding up her train; next to her, the Princess Royal; after her, Princess Augusta, and their lady-in-waiting behind them. They are pretty, rather than beautiful; well-shaped, fair complexions, and a tincture of the King's countenance. The two sisters look much alike; they were both dressed in black and silver silk, with silver netting upon the coat, and their heads full of diamond pins. The Queen was in purple and silver. She is not well shaped nor handsome. As to the ladies of the Court, rank and title may compensate for want of personal charms; but they are, in general, very plain, ill-shaped, and ugly; but don't you tell anybody that I say so. If one wants to see beauty, one must go to Ranelagh; there it is collected, in one bright constellation. There were two ladies very elegant, at Court,— Lady Salisbury and Lady Talbot; but the observation did not in general hold good that fine feathers make fine birds. I saw many who were vastly richer dressed than your friends, but I will venture to say that I saw none neater or more elegant: which praise I ascribe to the taste of Mrs. Temple and my mantuamaker; for, after having declared that I would not have any foil or tinsel about me, they fixed upon the dress I have described.

[Inclosure to her niece]

My Dear Betsey:

I BELIEVE I once promised to give you an account of that kind of visiting called a ladies' rout. There are two kinds; one where a lady sets apart a particular day in the week to see company. These are held only five months in the year, it being quite out of fashion to be seen in London during the summer. When a lady returns from the country she goes round and leaves a card with all her acquaintance, and then sends them an invitation to attend her routs during the season. The other kind is where a lady sends to you for certain evenings, and the cards are always addressed in her own name, both to gentlemen and ladies. The rooms are all set open, and card tables set in each room, the lady of the house receiving her company at the door of the drawing-room, where a set number of courtesies are given and received, with as much order as is necessary for a soldier who goes through the different evolutions of his exercise. The visitor then proceeds into the room without appearing to notice any other person, and takes her seat at the card table.

> "Nor can the muse her aid impart,
> Unskilled in all the terms of art,
> Nor in harmonious numbers put
> The deal, the shuffle, and the cut.
> Go, Tom, and light the ladies up,
> It must be one before we sup."

At these parties it is usual for each lady to play a rubber, as it is termed, when you must lose or win a few guineas. To give each a fair chance, the lady then rises and gives her seat to another set. It is no unusual thing to have your rooms so crowded that not more than half the company can sit at once, yet this is called *society and polite life.* They treat their company with coffee, tea, lemonade, orgeat, and cake. I know of but one agreeable circumstance attending these parties, which is, that you may go away when you please without disturbing anybody. I was early in the winter invited to Madame de Pinto's, the Portuguese Minister's. I went accordingly. There were about two hundred persons present. I knew not a single lady but by sight, having met them at Court; and it is an established rule, though you were to meet as often as three nights in the week, never to speak together, or know each other unless particularly introduced. I was, however, at no loss for conversation, Madame de Pinto being very polite, and the foreign ministers being the most of them present, who had dined with us, and to whom I had been early introduced. It being Sunday evening, I declined playing cards; indeed, I always get excused when I can. And Heaven forbid I should

"Catch the manners living as they rise."

Yet I must submit to a party or two of this kind. Having attended several, I must return the compliment in the same way. Yesterday we dined at Mrs. Paradice's. I refer you to Mr. Storer for an account of this family. Mr. Jefferson, Colonel Smith, the Prussian and Venetian ministers, were of the company, and several other persons who were strangers. At eight o'clock we returned home in order to dress ourselves for the ball at the French Ambassador's, to which we had received an invitation a fortnight before. He has been absent ever since our arrival here, till three weeks ago. He has a levee every Sunday evening, at which there are usually several hundred persons. The Hotel de France is beautifully situated, fronting St. James's Park, one end of the house standing upon Hyde Park. It is a most superb building. About half-past nine we went, and found some company collected. Many very brilliant ladies of the first distinction were present. The dancing commenced about ten, and the rooms soon filled. The room which he had built for this purpose is large enough for five or six hundred persons. It is most elegantly decorated, hung with a gold tissue, ornamented with twelve brilliant cut lustres, each containing twenty-four candles. At one end there are two large arches; these were adorned with wreaths and bunches of artificial flowers upon the walls; in the alcoves were cornucopiæ loaded with oranges, sweetmeats, and other trifles. Coffee, tea, lemonade, orgeat, and so forth, were taken here by every person who chose to go for them. There were covered seats all around the room for those who chose to dance. In the other rooms, card tables, and a large faro table, were set; this is a new kind of game, which is much practiced here. Many of the company who did not dance retired here to amuse themselves. The whole style of the house and furniture is such as becomes the ambassador from one of the first monarchies in Europe. He had twenty thousand guineas allowed him in the first instance to furnish his house, and an annual salary of ten thousand more. He has agreeably blended the magnificence and splendor of France with the neatness and elegance of England. Your cousin had unfortunately taken a cold a few days before, and was very unfit to go out. She appeared so unwell that about one we retired without staying for supper, the sight of which only I regretted, as it was, in style, no doubt, superior to anything I have seen. The Prince of Wales came about eleven o'clock. Mrs. Fitzherbert was also present, but I could not distinguish her. But who is this lady? methinks I hear you say. She is a lady to whom, against the laws of the realm, the Prince of Wales is privately married, as is universally believed. She appears with him in all public parties, and he avows his marriage wherever he dares. They have been the topic of conversation in all companies for a long time, and it is now said that a young George may be expected in the course of the summer. She was a widow of about thirty-two years of age, whom he a long time persecuted in order to get her upon his own terms; but finding he could not succeed, he quieted her conscience by matrimony, which, however valid in the eye of heaven, is set aside by the laws of the land, which forbids a prince of the blood to marry a subject. As to dresses, I believe I must leave them to be described to your sister. I am sorry I have nothing better to send you than a sash and a Vandyke ribbon. The narrow is to put round the edge of a hat, or you may trim whatever you please with it.

HENRY ADAMS

(1838–)

THE gifts of expression and literary taste which have always characterized the Adams family are most prominently represented by this historian. He has also its great memory, power of acquisition, intellectual independence, and energy of nature. The latter is tempered in him with inherited self-control, the moderation of judgment bred by wide historical knowledge, and a pervasive atmosphere of literary good-breeding which constantly substitutes allusive irony for crude statement, the rapier for the tomahawk.

Henry Adams is the third son of Charles Francis Adams, Sr., — the able Minister to England during the Civil War, — and grandson of John Quincy Adams. He was born in Boston, February 16th, 1838, graduated from Harvard in 1858, and served as private secretary to his father in England. In 1870 he became editor of the North American Review and Professor of History at Harvard, in which place he won wide repute for originality and power of inspiring enthusiasm for research in his pupils. He has written several essays and books on historical subjects, and edited others,—'Essays on Anglo-Saxon Law' (1876), 'Documents Relating to New England Federalism' (1877), 'Albert Gallatin' (1879), 'Writings of Albert Gallatin' (1879), 'John Randolph' (1882) in the 'American Statesmen' Series, and 'Historical Essays'; but his great life-work and monument is his 'History of the United States, 1801-17' (the Jefferson and Madison administrations), to write which he left his professorship in 1877, and after passing many years in London, in other foreign capitals, in Washington, and elsewhere, studying archives, family papers, published works, shipyards, and many other things, in preparation for it, published the first volume in 1889, and the last in 1891. It is in nine volumes, of which the introductory chapters and the index make up one.

The work in its inception (though not in its execution) is a polemic tract—a family vindication, an act of pious duty; its subtitle might be, 'A Justification of John Quincy Adams for Breaking with the Federalist Party.' So taken, the reader who loves historical fights and seriously desires truth should read the chapters on the Hartford Convention and its preliminaries side by side with the corresponding pages in Henry Cabot Lodge's 'Life of George Cabot.' If he cannot judge from the pleadings of these two able advocates with briefs for different sides, it is not for lack of full exposition.

But the 'History' is far more and higher than a piece of special pleading. It is in the main, both as to domestic and international matters, a resolutely cool and impartial presentation of facts and judgments on all sides of a period where passionate partisanship lies almost in the very essence of the questions—a tone contrasting oddly with the political action and feeling of the two Presidents. Even where, as toward the New England Federalists, many readers will consider him unfair in his deductions, he never tampers with or unfairly proportions the facts.

The work is a model of patient study, not alone of what is conventionally accepted as historic material, but of all subsidiary matter necessary to expert discussion of the problems involved. He goes deeply into economic and social facts; he has instructed himself in military science like a West Point student, in army needs like a quartermaster, in naval construction, equipment, and management like a naval officer. Of purely literary qualities, the history presents a high order of constructive art in amassing minute details without obscuring the main outlines; luminous statement; and the results of a very powerful memory, which enables him to keep before his vision every incident of the long chronicle with its involved groupings, so that an armory of instructive comparisons, as well as of polemic missiles, is constantly ready to his hand. He follows the latest historical canons as to giving authorities.

The history advances many novel views, and controverts many accepted facts. The relation of Napoleon's warfare against Hayti and Toussaint to the great Continental struggle, and the position he assigns it as the turning point of that greater contest, is perhaps the most important of these. But almost as striking are his views on the impressment problem and the provocations to the War of 1812; wherein he leads to the most unexpected deduction,—namely, that the grievances on *both* sides were much greater than is generally supposed. He shows that the profit and security of the American merchant service drew thousands of English seamen into it, where they changed their names and passed for American citizens, greatly embarrassing English naval operations. On the other hand, he shows that English outrages and insults were so gross that no nation with spirit enough to be entitled to separate existence ought to have endured them. He reverses the severe popular judgment on Madison for consenting to the war—on the assumed ground of coveting another term as President—which every other historian and biographer from Hildreth to Sydney Howard Gay has pronounced, and which has become a stock historical convention; holds Jackson's campaign ending at New Orleans an imbecile undertaking redeemed only by an act of instinctive pugnacity at the end; gives Scott and Jacob Brown the honor they have never before received in fair measure; and in many other points redistributes praise and blame with entire independence, and with curious effect on many popular ideas. His views on the Hartford Convention of 1814 are part of the Federalist controversy already referred to.

THE AUSPICES OF THE WAR OF 1812

From the 'History of the United States,' Vol. vii., Chap. 1

THE American declaration of war against England, July 18th, 1812, annoyed those European nations that were gathering their utmost resources for resistance to Napoleon's attack. Russia could not but regard it as an unfriendly act, equally bad for political and commercial interests. Spain and Portugal, whose armies were fed largely if not chiefly on American grain imported by British money under British protection, dreaded to see their supplies cut off. Germany, waiting only for strength to recover her freedom, had to reckon against one more element in Napoleon's vast military resources. England needed to make greater efforts in order to maintain the advantages she had gained in Russia and Spain. Even in America no one doubted the earnestness of England's wish for peace; and if Madison and Monroe insisted on her acquiescence in their terms, they insisted because they believed that their military position entitled them to expect it. The reconquest of Russia and Spain by Napoleon, an event almost certain to happen, could hardly fail to force from England the concessions, not in themselves unreasonable, which the United States required.

This was, as Madison to the end of his life maintained, "a fair calculation;" but it was exasperating to England, who thought that America ought to be equally interested with Europe in overthrowing the military despotism of Napoleon, and should not conspire with him for gain. At first the new war disconcerted the feeble Ministry that remained in office on the death of Spencer Perceval: they counted on preventing it, and did their utmost to stop it after it was begun. The tone of arrogance which had so long characterized government and press disappeared for the moment. Obscure newspapers, like the London Evening Star, still sneered at the idea that Great Britain was to be "driven from the proud pre-eminence which the blood and treasure of her sons have attained for her among the nations, by a piece of striped bunting flying at the mastheads of a few fir-built frigates, manned by a handful of bastards and outlaws," — a phrase which had great success in America, — but such defiances expressed a temper studiously held in restraint previous to the moment when the war was seen to be inevitable. . . .

The realization that no escape could be found from an American war was forced on the British public at a moment of much discouragement. Almost simultaneously a series of misfortunes occurred which brought the stoutest and most intelligent Englishmen to the verge of despair. In Spain Wellington, after winning the battle of Salamanca in July, occupied Madrid in August, and obliged Soult to evacuate Andalusia; but his siege of Burgos failed, and as the French generals concentrated their scattered forces, Wellington was obliged to abandon Madrid once more. October 21st he was again in full retreat on Portugal. The apparent failure of his campaign was almost simultaneous with the apparent success of Napoleon's; for the Emperor entered Moscow September 14th, and the news of this triumph, probably decisive of Russian submission, reached England about October 3d. Three days later arrived intelligence of William Hull's surrender at Detroit; but this success was counterbalanced by simultaneous news of Isaac Hull's startling capture of the Guerrière, and the certainty of a prolonged war.

In the desponding condition of the British people, — with a deficient harvest, bad weather, wheat at nearly five dollars a bushel, and the American supply likely to be cut off; consols at 57½, gold at thirty per cent. premium; a Ministry without credit or authority, and a general consciousness of blunders, incompetence, and corruption, — every new tale of disaster sank the hopes of England and called out wails of despair. In that state of mind the loss of the Guerrière assumed portentous dimensions. The Times was especially loud in lamenting the capture: —

> "We witnessed the gloom which that event cast over high and honorable minds. . . . Never before in the history of the world did an English frigate strike to an American; and though we cannot say that Captain Dacres, under all circumstances, is punishable for this act, yet we do say there are commanders in the English navy who would a thousand times rather have gone down with their colors flying, than have set their fellow sailors so fatal an example."

No country newspaper in America, railing at Hull's cowardice and treachery, showed less knowledge or judgment than the London Times, which had written of nothing but war since its name had been known in England. Any American could have assured the English press that British frigates before the Guerrière had struck to American; and even in England men had not forgotten the name of the British frigate Serapis, or that of the American captain Paul Jones. Yet the Times's ignorance was less unreasonable than its requirement that Dacres should have gone down with his ship, — a cry of passion the more unjust to Dacres because he fought his ship as long as she could float. Such sensitiveness seemed extravagant in a society which had been hardened by centuries of warfare; yet the Times reflected fairly the feelings of Englishmen. George Canning, speaking in open Parliament not long afterward, said that the loss of the Guerrière and the Macedonian produced a sensation in the country scarcely to be equaled by the most violent convulsions of nature.

"Neither can I agree with those who complain of the shock of consternation throughout Great Britain as having been greater than the occasion required. . . . It cannot be too deeply felt that the sacred spell of the invincibility of the British navy was broken by those unfortunate captures."

Of all spells that could be cast on a nation, that of believing itself invincible was perhaps the one most profitably broken; but the process of recovering its senses was agreeable to no nation, and to England, at that moment of distress, it was as painful as Canning described. The matter was not mended by the Courier and Morning Post, who, taking their tone from the Admiralty, complained of the enormous superiority of the American frigates, and called them "line-of-battle ships in disguise." Certainly the American forty-four was a much heavier ship than the British thirty-eight, but the difference had been as well known in the British navy before these actions as it was afterward; and Captain Dacres himself, the Englishman who best knew the relative force of the ships, told his court of inquiry a different story:— "I am so well aware that the success of my opponent was owing to fortune, that it is my earnest wish, and would be the happiest period of my life, to be once more opposed to the Constitution, with them [the old crew] under my command, in a frigate of similar force with the Guerrière." After all had been said, the unpleasant result remained that in future, British frigates, like other frigates, could safely fight only their inferiors in force. What applied to the Guerrière and Macedonian against the Constitution and United States, where the British force was inferior, applied equally to the Frolic against the Wasp, where no inferiority could be shown. The British newspapers thenceforward admitted what America wished to prove, that, ship for ship, British were no more than the equals of Americans.

Society soon learned to take a more sensible view of the subject; but as the first depression passed away, a consciousness of personal wrong took its place. The United States were supposed to have stabbed England in the back at the moment when her hands were tied, when her existence was in the most deadly peril and her anxieties were most heavy. England never could forgive treason so base and cowardice so vile. That Madison had been from the first a tool and accomplice of Bonaparte was thenceforward so fixed an idea in British history that time could not shake it. Indeed, so complicated and so historical had the causes of war become that no one even in America could explain or understand them, while Englishmen could see only that America required England as the price of peace to destroy herself by abandoning her naval power, and that England preferred to die fighting rather than to die by her own hand. The American party in England was extinguished; no further protest was heard against the war; and the British people thought moodily of revenge.

This result was unfortunate for both parties, but was doubly unfortunate for America, because her mode of making the issue told in her enemy's favor. The same impressions which silenced in England open sympathy with America, stimulated in America acute sympathy with England. Argument was useless against people in a passion, convinced of their own injuries. Neither Englishmen nor Federalists were open to reasoning. They found their action easy from the moment they classed the United States as an ally of France, like Bavaria or Saxony; and they had no scruples of conscience, for the practical alliance was clear, and the fact proved sufficiently the intent. . . .

The loss of two or three thirty-eight-gun frigates on the ocean was a matter of trifling consequence to the British government, which had a force of four ships-of-the-line and six or eight frigates in Chesapeake Bay alone, and which built every year dozens of ships-of-the-line and frigates to replace those lost or worn out; but although American privateers wrought more injury to British interests than was caused or could be caused by the American navy, the pride of Engand cared little about mercantile losses, and cared immensely for its fighting reputation. The theory that the American was a degenerate Englishman — a theory chiefly due to American teachings — lay at the bottom of British politics. Even the late British minister at Washington, Foster, a man of average intelligence, thought it manifest good taste and good sense to say of the Americans in his speech of February 18th, 1813, in Parliament, that "generally speaking, they were not a people we should be proud to acknowledge as our relations." Decatur and Hull were engaged in a social rather than in a political contest, and were aware that the serious work on their hands had little to do with England's power, but much to do with her manners. The mortification of England at the capture of her frigates was the measure of her previous arrogance. . . .

Every country must begin war by asserting that it will never give way; and of all countries England, which had waged innumerable wars, knew best when perseverance cost more than concession. Even at that early moment Parliament was evidently perplexed, and would willingly have yielded had it seen means of escape from its naval fetich, impressment. Perhaps the perplexity was more evident in the Commons than in the Lords; for Castlereagh, while defending his own course with elaborate care, visibly stumbled over the right of impressment. Even while claiming that its abandonment would have been «vitally dangerous if not fatal» to England's security, he added that he «would be the last man in the world to underrate the inconvenience which the Americans sustained in consequence of our assertion of the right of search.» The embarrassment became still plainer when he narrowed the question to one of statistics, and showed that the whole contest was waged over the forcible retention of some eight hundred seamen among one hundred and forty-five thousand employed in British service. Granting the number were twice as great, he continued, «would the House believe that there was any man so infatuated, or that the British empire was driven to such straits that for such a paltry consideration as seventeen hundred sailors, his Majesty's government would needlessly irritate the pride of a neutral nation or violate that justice which was due to one country from another?» If Liverpool's argument explained the causes of war, Castlereagh's explained its inevitable result; for since the war must cost England at least 10,000,000 pounds a year, could Parliament be so infatuated as to pay 10,000 pounds a year for each American sailor detained in service, when one-tenth of the amount, if employed in raising the wages of the British sailor, would bring any required number of seamen back to their ships? The whole British navy in 1812 cost 20,000,000 pounds; the pay-roll amounted to only 3,000,000 pounds; the common sailor was paid four pounds bounty and eighteen pounds a year, which might have been trebled at half the cost of an American war.

WHAT THE WAR OF 1812 DEMONSTRATED

From the ‹History of the United States,› Vol. ix., Chapter 10

A PEOPLE whose chief trait was antipathy to war, and to any system organized with military energy, could scarcely develop great results in national administration; yet the Americans prided themselves chiefly on their political capacity. Even the war did not undeceive them, although the incapacity brought into evidence by the war was undisputed, and was most remarkable among the communities which believed themselves to be most gifted with political sagacity. Virginia and Massachusetts by turns admitted failure in dealing with issues so simple that the newest societies, like Tennessee and Ohio, understood them by instinct. That incapacity in national politics should appear as a leading trait in American character was unexpected by Americans, but might naturally result from their conditions. The better test of American character was not political but social, and was to be found not in the government but in the people.

The sixteen years of Jefferson and Madison's rule furnished international tests of popular intelligence upon which Americans could depend. The ocean was the only open field for competition among nations. Americans enjoyed there no natural or artificial advantages over Englishmen, Frenchmen, or Spaniards; indeed, all these countries possessed navies, resources, and experience greater than were to be found in the United States. Yet the Americans developed, in the course of twenty years, a surprising degree of skill in naval affairs. The evidence of their success was to be found nowhere so complete as in the avowals of Englishmen who knew best the history of naval progress. The American invention of the fast-sailing schooner or clipper was the more remarkable because, of all American inventions, this alone sprang from direct competition with Europe. During ten centuries of struggle the nations of Europe had labored to obtain superiority over each other in ship-construction; yet Americans instantly made improvements which gave them superiority, and which Europeans were unable immediately to imitate even after seeing them. Not only were American vessels better in model, faster in sailing, easier and quicker in handling, and more economical in working than the European, but they were also better equipped. The English complained as a grievance that the Americans adopted new and unwarranted devices in naval warfare; that their vessels were heavier and better constructed, and their missiles of unusual shape and improper use. The Americans resorted to expedients that had not been tried before, and excited a mixture of irritation and respect in the English service, until "Yankee smartness" became a national misdemeanor.

The English admitted themselves to be slow to change their habits, but the French were both quick and scientific; yet Americans did on the ocean what the French, under stronger inducements, failed to do. The French privateer preyed upon British commerce for twenty years without seriously injuring it; but no sooner did the American privateer sail from French ports than the rates of insurance doubled in London, and an outcry for protection arose among English shippers which the Admiralty could not calm. The British newspapers were filled with assertions that the American cruiser was the superior of any vessel of its class, and threatened to overthrow England's supremacy on the ocean.

Another test of relative intelligence was furnished by the battles at sea. Instantly after the loss of the Guerrière the English discovered and complained that American gunnery was superior to their own. They explained their inferiority by the length of time that had elapsed since their navy had found on the ocean an enemy to fight. Every vestige of hostile fleets had been swept away, until, after the battle of Trafalgar, British frigates ceased practice with their guns. Doubtless the British navy had become somewhat careless in the absence of a dangerous enemy, but Englishmen were themselves aware that some other cause must have affected their losses. Nothing showed that Nelson's line-of-battle ships, frigates, or sloops were, as a rule, better fought than the Macedonian and Java, the Avon and Reindeer. Sir Howard Douglas, the chief authority on the subject, attempted in vain to explain British reverses by the deterioration of British gunnery. His analysis showed only that American gunnery was extraordinarily good. Of all vessels, the sloop-of-war — on account of its smallness, its quick motion, and its more accurate armament of thirty-two-pound carronades — offered the best test of relative gunnery, and Sir Howard Douglas in commenting upon the destruction of the Peacock and Avon could only say: — "In these two actions it is clear that the fire of the British vessels was thrown too high, and that the ordnance of their opponents were expressly and carefully aimed at and took effect chiefly in the hull."

The battle of the Hornet and Penguin, as well as those of the Reindeer and Avon, showed that the excellence of American gunnery continued till the close of the war. Whether at point-blank range or at long-distance practice, the Americans used guns as they had never been used at sea before.

None of the reports of former British victories showed that the British fire had been more destructive at any previous time than in 1812, and no report of any commander since the British navy existed showed so much damage inflicted on an opponent in so short a time as was proved to have been inflicted on themselves by the reports of British commanders in the American war. The strongest proof of American superiority was given by the best British officers, like Broke, who strained every nerve to maintain an equality with American gunnery. So instantaneous and energetic was the effort that according to the British historian of the war, "A British forty-six-gun frigate of 1813 was half as effective again as a British forty-six-gun frigate of 1812;" and as he justly said, "the slaughtered crews and the shattered hulks" of the captured British ships proved that no want of their old fighting qualities accounted for their repeated and almost habitual mortifications.

Unwilling as the English were to admit the superior skill of Americans on the ocean, they did not hesitate to admit it, in certain respects, on land. The American rifle in American hands was affirmed to have no equal in the world. This admission could scarcely be withheld after the lists of killed and wounded which followed almost every battle; but the admission served to check a wider inquiry. In truth, the rifle played but a small part in the war. Winchester's men at the river Raisin may have owed their over-confidence, as the British Forty-first owed its losses, to that weapon, and at New Orleans five or six hundred of Coffee's men, who were out of range, were armed with the rifle; but the surprising losses of the British were commonly due to artillery and musketry fire. At New Orleans the artillery was chiefly engaged. The artillery battle of January 1st, according to British accounts, amply proved the superiority of American gunnery on that occasion, which was probably the fairest test during the war. The battle of January 8th was also chiefly an artillery battle: the main British column never arrived within fair musket range; Pakenham was killed by a grape-shot, and the main column of his troops halted more than one hundred yards from the parapet.

The best test of British and American military qualities, both for men and weapons, was Scott's battle of Chippawa. Nothing intervened to throw a doubt over the fairness of the trial. Two parallel lines of regular soldiers, practically equal in numbers, armed with similar weapons, moved in close order toward each other across a wide, open plain, without cover or advantage of position, stopping at intervals to load and fire, until one line broke and retired. At the same time two three-gun batteries, the British being the heavier, maintained a steady fire from positions opposite each other. According to the reports, the two infantry lines in the centre never came nearer than eighty yards. Major-General Riall reported that then, owing to severe losses, his troops broke and could not be rallied. Comparison of official report showed that the British lost in killed and wounded four hundred and sixty-nine men; the Americans, two hundred and ninety-six. Some doubts always affect the returns of wounded, because the severity of the wound cannot be known; but dead men tell their own tale. Riall reported one hundred and forty-eight killed; Scott reported sixty-one. The severity of the losses showed that the battle was sharply contested, and proved the personal bravery of both armies. Marksmanship decided the result, and the returns proved that the American fire was superior to that of the British in the proportion of more than fifty per cent. if estimated by the entire loss, and of two hundred and forty-two to one hundred if estimated by the deaths alone.

The conclusion seemed incredible, but it was supported by the results of the naval battles. The Americans showed superiority amounting in some cases to twice the efficiency of their enemies in the use of weapons. The best French critic of the naval war, Jurien de la Gravière, said:—"An enormous superiority in the rapidity and precision of their fire can alone explain the difference in the losses sustained by the combatants." So far from denying this conclusion, the British press constantly alleged it, and the British officers complained of it. The discovery caused great surprise, and in both British services much attention was at once directed to improvement in artillery and musketry. Nothing could exceed the frankness with which Englishmen avowed their inferiority. According to Sir Francis Head, "gunnery was in naval warfare in the extraordinary state of ignorance we have just described, when our lean children, the American people, taught us, rod in hand, our first lesson in the art.» The English text-book on Naval Gunnery, written by Major-General Sir Howard Douglas immediately after the peace, devoted more attention to the short American war than to all the battles of Napoleon, and began by admitting that Great Britain had «entered with too great confidence on war with a marine much more expert than that of any of our European enemies.» The admission appeared «objectionable» even to the author; but he did not add, what was equally true, that it applied as well to the land as to the sea service.

No one questioned the bravery of the British forces, or the ease with which they often routed larger bodies of militia; but the losses they inflicted were rarely as great as those they suffered. Even at Bladensburg, where they met little resistance, their loss was several times greater than that of the Americans. At Plattsburg, where the intelligence and quickness of Macdonough and his men alone won the victory, his ships were in effect stationary batteries, and enjoyed the same superiority in gunnery. «The Saratoga,» said his official report, «had fifty-five round-shot in her hull; the Confiance, one hundred and five. The enemy's shot passed principally just over our heads, as there were not twenty whole hammocks in the nettings at the close of the action.»

The greater skill of the Americans was not due to special training; for the British service was better trained in gunnery, as in everything else, than the motley armies and fleets that fought at New Orleans and on the Lakes. Critics constantly said that every American had learned from his childhood the use of the rifle; but he certainly had not learned to use cannon in shooting birds or hunting deer, and he knew less than the Englishman about the handling of artillery and muskets. The same intelligence that selected the rifle and the long pivot-gun for favorite weapons was shown in handling the carronade, and every other instrument however clumsy.

Another significant result of the war was the sudden development of scientific engineering in the United States. This branch of the military service owed its efficiency and almost its existence to the military school at West Point, established in 1802. The school was at first much neglected by government. The number of graduates before the year 1812 was very small; but at the outbreak of the war the corps of engineers was already efficient. Its chief was Colonel Joseph Gardner Swift, of Massachusetts, the first graduate of the academy: Colonel Swift planned the defenses of New York Harbor. The lieutenant-colonel in 1812 was Walker Keith Armistead, of Virginia,—the third graduate, who planned the defenses of Norfolk. Major William McRee, of North Carolina, became chief engineer to General Brown and constructed the fortifications at Fort Erie, which cost the British General Gordon Drummond the loss of half his army, besides the mortification of defeat. Captain Eleazer Derby Wood, of New York, constructed Fort Meigs, which enabled Harrison to defeat the attack of Proctor in May, 1813. Captain Joseph Gilbert Totten, of New York, was chief engineer to General Izard at Plattsburg, where he directed the fortifications that stopped the advance of Prevost's great army. None of the works constructed by a graduate of West Point was captured by the enemy; and had an engineer been employed at Washington by Armstrong and Winder, the city would have been easily saved.

Perhaps without exaggeration the West Point Academy might be said to have decided, next to the navy, the result of the war. The works at New Orleans were simple in character, and as far as they were due to engineering skill were directed by Major Latour, a Frenchman; but the war was already ended when the battle of New Orleans was fought. During the critical campaign of 1814, the West Point engineers doubled the capacity of the little American army for resistance, and introduced a new and scientific character into American life.

THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE CONSTITUTION AND THE GUERRIÈRE

From the ‹History of the United States,› Vol. vi., Chapter 17

As Broke's squadron swept along the coast it seized whatever it met, and on July 16th caught one of President Jefferson's sixteen-gun brigs, the Nautilus. The next day it came on a richer prize. The American navy seemed ready to outstrip the army in the race for disaster. The Constitution, the best frigate in the United States service, sailed into the midst of Broke's five ships. Captain Isaac Hull, in command of the Constitution, had been detained at Annapolis shipping a new crew until July 5th, the day when Broke's squadron left Halifax; then the ship got under way and stood down Chesapeake Bay on her voyage to New York. The wind was ahead and very light. Not until July 10th did the ship anchor off Cape Henry lighthouse, and not till sunrise of July 12th did she stand to the eastward and northward. Light head winds and a strong current delayed her progress till July 17th, when at two o'clock in the afternoon, off Barnegat on the New Jersey coast, the lookout at the masthead discovered four sails to the northward, and two hours later a fifth sail to the northeast. Hull took them for Rodgers's squadron. The wind was light, and Hull being to windward determined to speak the nearest vessel, the last to come in sight. The afternoon passed without bringing the ships together, and at ten o'clock in the evening, finding that the nearest ship could not answer the night signal, Hull decided to lose no time in escaping.

Then followed one of the most exciting and sustained chases recorded in naval history. At daybreak the next morning one British frigate was astern within five or six miles, two more were to leeward, and the rest of the fleet some ten miles astern, all making chase. Hull put out his boats to tow the Constitution; Broke summoned the boats of the squadron to tow the Shannon. Hull then bent all his spare rope to the cables, dropped a small anchor half a mile ahead, in twenty-six fathoms of water, and warped his ship along. Broke quickly imitated the device, and slowly gained on the chase. The Guerrière crept so near Hull's lee beam as to open fire, but her shot fell short. Fortunately the wind, though slight, favored Hull. All night the British and American crews toiled on, and when morning came the Belvidera, proving to be the best sailer, got in advance of her consorts, working two kedge anchors, until at two o'clock in the afternoon she tried in her turn to reach the Constitution with her bow guns, but in vain. Hull expected capture, but the Belvidera could not approach nearer without bringing her boats under the Constitution's stern guns; and the wearied crews toiled on, towing and kedging, the ships barely out of gunshot, till another morning came. The breeze, though still light, then allowed Hull to take in his boats, the Belvidera being two and a half miles in his wake, the Shannon three and a half miles on his lee, and the three other frigates well to leeward. The wind freshened, and the Constitution drew ahead, until, toward seven o'clock in the evening of July 19th, a heavy rain squall struck the ship, and by taking skillful advantage of it Hull left the Belvidera and Shannon far astern; yet until eight o'clock the next morning they were still in sight, keeping up the chase.

Perhaps nothing during the war tested American seamanship more thoroughly than these three days of combined skill and endurance in the face of the irresistible enemy. The result showed that Hull and the Constitution had nothing to fear in these respects. There remained the question whether the superiority extended to his guns; and such was the contempt of the British naval officers for American ships, that with this experience before their eyes they still believed one of their thirty-eight-gun frigates to be more than a match for an American forty-four, although the American, besides the heavier armament, had proved his capacity to outsail and out-manœuvre the Englishman. Both parties became more eager than ever for the test. For once, even the Federalists of New England felt their blood stir; for their own President and their own votes had called these frigates into existence, and a victory won by the Constitution, which had been built by their hands, was in their eyes a greater victory over their political opponents than over the British. With no half-hearted spirit the seagoing Bostonians showered well-weighed praises on Hull when his ship entered Boston Harbor, July 26th, after its narrow escape, and when he sailed again New England waited with keen interest to learn his fate.

Hull could not expect to keep command of the Constitution. Bainbridge was much his senior, and had the right to a preference in active service. Bainbridge then held and was ordered to retain command of the Constellation, fitting out at the Washington Navy Yard; but Secretary Hamilton, July 28th, ordered him to take command also of the Constitution on her arrival in port. Doubtless Hull expected this change, and probably the expectation induced him to risk a dangerous experiment; for without bringing his ship to the Charlestown Navy Yard, but remaining in the outer harbor, after obtaining such supplies as he needed, August 2d, he set sail without orders, and stood to the eastward. Having reached Cape Race without meeting an enemy, he turned southward, until on the night of August 18th he spoke a privateer, which told him of a British frigate near at hand. Following the privateersman's directions, the Constitution the next day, August 19th, [1812,] at two o'clock in the afternoon, latitude 41 deg. 42 min., longitude 55 deg. 48 min., sighted the Guerrière.

The meeting was welcome on both sides. Only three days before, Captain Dacres had entered on the log of a merchantman a challenge to any American frigate to meet him off Sandy Hook. Not only had the Guerrière for a long time been extremely offensive to every seafaring American, but the mistake which caused the Little Belt to suffer so seriously for the misfortune of being taken for the Guerrière had caused a corresponding feeling of anger in the officers of the British frigate. The meeting of August 19th had the character of a preconcerted duel.

The wind was blowing fresh from the northwest, with the sea running high. Dacres backed his main topsail and waited. Hull shortened sail, and ran down before the wind. For about an hour the two ships wore and wore again, trying to get advantage of position; until at last, a few minutes before six o'clock, they came together side by side, within pistol shot, the wind almost astern, and running before it, they pounded each other with all their strength. As rapidly as the guns could be worked, the Constitution poured in broadside after broadside, double-shotted with round and grape; and without exaggeration, the echo of these guns startled the world. "In less than thirty minutes from the time we got alongside of the enemy," reported Hull, "she was left without a spar standing, and the hull cut to pieces in such a manner as to make it difficult to keep her above water."

That Dacres should have been defeated was not surprising; that he should have expected to win was an example of British arrogance that explained and excused the war. The length of the Constitution was one hundred and seventy-three feet, that of the Guerrière was one hundred and fifty-six feet; the extreme breadth of the Constitution was forty-four feet, that of the Guerrière was forty feet: or within a few inches in both cases. The Constitution carried thirty-two long twenty-four-pounders, the Guerrière thirty long eighteen-pounders and two long twelve-pounders; the Constitution carried twenty thirty-two-pound carronades, the Guerrière sixteen. In every respect, and in proportion of ten to seven, the Constitution was the better ship; her crew was more numerous in proportion of ten to six. Dacres knew this very nearly as well as it was known to Hull, yet he sought a duel. What he did not know was that in a still greater proportion the American officers and crew were better and more intelligent seamen than the British, and that their passionate wish to repay old scores gave them extraordinary energy. So much greater was the moral superiority than the physical, that while the Guerrière's force counted as seven against ten, her losses counted as though her force were only two against ten.

Dacres's error cost him dear; for among the Guerrière's crew of two hundred and seventy-two, seventy-nine were killed or wounded, and the ship was injured beyond saving before Dacres realized his mistake, although he needed only thirty minutes of close fighting for the purpose. He never fully understood the causes of his defeat, and never excused it by pleading, as he might have done, the great superiority of his enemy.

Hull took his prisoners on board the Constitution, and after blowing up the Guerrière sailed for Boston, where he arrived on the morning of August 30th. The Sunday silence of the Puritan city broke into excitement as the news passed through the quiet streets that the Constitution was below in the outer harbor with Dacres and his crew prisoners on board. No experience of history ever went to the heart of New England more directly than this victory, so peculiarly its own: but the delight was not confined to New England, and extreme though it seemed, it was still not extravagant; for however small the affair might appear on the general scale of the world's battles, it raised the United States in one half-hour to the rank of a first class Power in the world.

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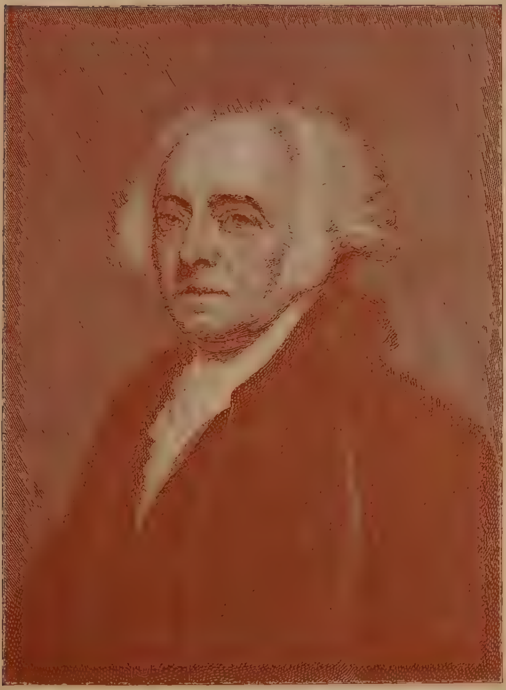
JOHN ADAMS

(1735–1826)

John Adams, second President of the United States, was born at Braintree, Mass., October 19th, 1735, and died there July 4th, 1826, the year after his son too was inaugurated President. He was the first conspicuous member of an enduringly powerful and individual family. The Adams race have mostly been vehement, proud, pugnacious, and independent, with hot tempers and strong wills; but with high ideals, dramatic devotion to duty, and the intense democratic sentiment so often found united with personal aristocracy of feeling. They have been men of affairs first, with large practical ability, but with a deep strain of the man of letters which in this generation has outshone the other faculties; strong-headed and hard-working students, with powerful memories and fluent gifts of expression.



JOHN ADAMS.

All these characteristics went to make up John Adams; but their enumeration does not furnish a complete picture of him, or reveal the virile, choleric, masterful man. And he was far more lovable and far more popular than his equally great son, also a typical Adams, from the same cause which produced some of his worst blunders and misfortunes,—a generous impulsiveness of feeling which made it impossible for him to hold his tongue at the wrong time and place for talking. But so fervid, combative, and opinionated a man was sure to gain much more hate than love; because love results from comprehension, which only the few close to him could have, while hate—toward an honest man—is the outcome of ignorance, which most of the world cannot avoid. Admiration and respect, however, he had from the majority of his party at the worst of times; and the best encomium on him is that the closer his public acts are examined, the more credit they reflect not only on his abilities but on his unselfishness.

Born of a line of Massachusetts farmers, he graduated from Harvard in 1755. After teaching a grammar school and beginning to read theology, he studied law and began practice in 1758, soon becoming a leader at the bar and in public life. In 1764 he married the noble and delightful woman whose letters furnish unconscious testimony to his lovable qualities. All through the germinal years of the Revolution he was one of the foremost patriots, steadily opposing any abandonment or compromise of essential rights. In 1765 he was counsel for Boston with Otis and Gridley to support the town's memorial against the Stamp Act. In 1766 he was selectman. In 1768 the royal government offered him the post of advocate-general in the Court of Admiralty,—a lucrative bribe to desert the opposition; but he refused it. Yet in 1770, as a matter of high professional duty, he became counsel (successfully) for the British soldiers on trial for the «Boston Massacre.» Though there was a present uproar of abuse, Mr. Adams was shortly after elected Representative to the General Court by more than three to one. In March, 1774, he contemplated writing the «History of the Contest between Britain and America!» On June 17th he presided over the meeting at Faneuil Hall to consider the Boston Port Bill, and at the same hour was elected Representative to the first Congress at Philadelphia (September 1) by the Provincial Assembly held in defiance of the government. Returning thence, he engaged in newspaper debate on the political issues till the battle of Lexington.

Shortly after, he again journeyed to Philadelphia to the Congress of May 5th, 1775; where he did on his own motion, to the disgust of his Northern associates and the reluctance even of the Southerners, one of the most important and decisive acts of the Revolution,—

induced Congress to adopt the forces in New England as a national army and put George Washington of Virginia at its head, thus engaging the Southern colonies irrevocably in the war and securing the one man who could make it a success. In 1776 he was a chief agent in carrying a declaration of independence. He remained in Congress till November, 1777, as head of the War Department, very useful and laborious though making one dreadful mistake: he was largely responsible for the disastrous policy of ignoring the just claims and decent dignity of the military commanders, which lost the country some of its best officers and led directly to Arnold's treason. His reasons, exactly contrary to his wont, were good abstract logic but thorough practical nonsense.

In December, 1777, he was appointed commissioner to France to succeed Silas Deane, and after being chased by an English man-of-war (which he wanted to fight) arrived at Paris in safety. There he reformed a very bad state of affairs; but thinking it absurd to keep three envoys at one court (Dr. Franklin and Arthur Lee were there before him), he induced Congress to abolish his office, and returned in 1779. Chosen a delegate to the Massachusetts constitutional convention, he was called away from it to be sent again to France. There he remained as Franklin's colleague, detesting and distrusting him and the French foreign minister, Vergennes, embroiling himself with both and earning a cordial return of his warmest dislike from both, till July, 1780. He then went to Holland as volunteer minister, and in 1782 was formally recognized as from an independent nation. Meantime Vergennes intrigued with all his might to have Adams recalled, and actually succeeded in so tying his hands that half the advantages of independence would have been lost but for his contumacious persistence. In the final negotiations for peace, he persisted against his instructions in making the New England fisheries an ultimatum, and saved them. In 1783 he was commissioned to negotiate a commercial treaty with Great Britain, and in 1785 was made minister to that power. The wretched state of American affairs under the Confederation made it impossible to obtain any advantages for his country, and the vindictive feeling of the English made his life a purgatory, so that he was glad to come home in 1788.

In the first Presidential election of that year he was elected Vice-President on the ticket with Washington; and began a feud with Alexander Hamilton, the mighty leader of the Federalist party and chief organizer of our governmental machine, which ended in the overthrow of the party years before its time, and had momentous personal and literary results as well. He was as good a Federalist as Hamilton, and felt as much right to be leader if he could; Hamilton would not surrender his leadership, and the rivalry never ended till Hamilton's murder. In 1796 he was elected President against Jefferson. His Presidency is recognized as one of the ablest and most useful on the roll; but its personal memoirs are most painful and scandalous. The cabinet were nearly all Hamiltonians, regularly laid all the official secrets before Hamilton, and took advice from him to thwart the President. They disliked Mr. Adams's overbearing ways and obtrusive vanity, considered his policy destructive to the party and injurious to the country, and felt that loyalty to these involved and justified disloyalty to him. Finally his best act brought on an explosion. The French Directory had provoked a war with this country, which the Hamiltonian section of the leaders and much of the party hailed with delight; but showing signs of a better spirit, Mr. Adams, without consulting his Cabinet, who he knew would oppose it almost or quite unanimously, nominated a commission to frame a treaty with France. The storm of fury that broke on him from his party has rarely been surpassed, even in the case of traitors outright, and he was charged with being little better. He was renominated for President in 1800, but beaten by Jefferson, owing to the defections in his own party, largely of Hamilton's producing. The Federalist party never won another election; the Hamilton section laid its death to Mr. Adams, and American history is hot with the fires of this battle even yet.

Mr. Adams's later years were spent at home, where he was always interested in public affairs and sometimes much too free in comments on them; where he read immensely and wrote somewhat. He heartily approved his son's break with the Federalists on the Embargo. He died on the same day as Jefferson, both on the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

As a writer, Mr. Adams's powers show best in the work which can hardly be classed as literature, — his forcible and bitter political letters, diatribes, and polemics. As in his life, his merits and defects not only lie side by side, but spring from the same source, — his vehemence, self-confidence, and impatience of obstruction. He writes impetuously because he feels impetuously. With little literary grace, he possesses the charm that belongs to clear and energetic thought and sense transfused with hot emotion. John Fiske goes so far as to say that «as a writer of English, John Adams in many respects surpassed all his American contemporaries.» He was by no means without humor, — a characteristic which shows in some of his portraits, — and sometimes realized the humorous aspects of his own intense and exaggerative temperament. His remark about Timothy Pickering, that «under the simple appearance of a bald head and straight hair, he conceals the most ambitious designs,» is perfectly self-conscious in its quaint naïveté.

His ‘Life and Works,’ edited by his grandson, Charles Francis Adams, Sr., in ten volumes, is the great storehouse of his writings. The best popular account of his life is by John T. Morse, Jr., in the ‘American Statesmen’ series.

AT THE FRENCH COURT

From his Diary, June 7th, 1778, with his later comments in brackets

WENT to Versailles, in company with Mr. Lee, Mr. Izard and his lady, Mr. Lloyd and his lady, and Mr. François. Saw the grand procession of the Knights *du Saint-Esprit*, or *du Cordon Bleu*. At nine o'clock at night, went to the *grand couvert*, and saw the king, queen, and royal family, at supper; had a fine seat and situation close by the royal family, and had a distinct and full view of the royal pair.

[Our objects were to see the ceremonies of the knights, and in the evening the public supper of the royal family. The kneelings, the bows, and the courtesies of the knights, the dresses and decorations, the king seated on his throne, his investiture of a new created knight with the badges and ornaments of the order, and his majesty's profound and reverential bow before the altar as he retired, were novelties and curiosities to me, but surprised me much less than the patience and perseverance with which they all kneeled, for two hours together, upon the hard marble of which the floor of the chapel was made. The distinction of the blue ribbon was very dearly purchased at the price of enduring this painful operation four times in a year. The Count de Vergennes confessed to me that he was almost dead with the pain of it. And the only insinuation I ever heard, that the king was in any degree touched by the philosophy of the age, was, that he never discovered so much impatience, under any of the occurrences of his life, as in going through those tedious ceremonies of religion, to which so many hours of his life were condemned by the catholic church.

The queen was attended by her ladies to the gallery opposite to the altar, placed in the centre of the seat, and there left alone by the other ladies, who all retired. She was an object too sublime and beautiful for my dull pen to describe. I leave this enterprise to Mr. Burke. But in his description, there is more of the orator than of the philosopher. Her dress was everything that art and wealth could make it. One of the maids of honor told me she had diamonds upon her person to the value of eighteen millions of livres; and I always thought her majesty much beholden to her dress. Mr. Burke saw her probably but once. I have seen her fifty times perhaps, and in all the varieties of her dresses. She had a fine complexion, indicating perfect health, and was a handsome woman in her face and figure. But I have seen beauties much superior, both in countenance and form, in France, England, and America.

After the ceremonies of this institution are over, there is a collection for the poor; and that this closing scene may be as elegant as any of the former, a young lady of some of the first families in France is appointed to present the box to the knights. Her dress must be as rich and elegant, in proportion, as the Queen's, and her hair, motions, and curtsies must have as much dignity and grace as those of the knights. It was a curious entertainment to observe the easy air, the graceful bow, and the conscious dignity of the knight, in presenting his contribution; and the corresponding ease, grace, and dignity of the lady, in receiving it, were not less charming. Every muscle, nerve, and fibre of both seemed perfectly disciplined to perform its functions. The elevation of the arm, the bend of the elbow, and every finger in the hand of the knight, in putting his louis d'ors into the box appeared to be perfectly studied, because it was perfectly natural. How much devotion there was in all this I know not, but it was a consummate school to teach the rising generation the perfection of the French air, and external politeness and good-breeding. I have seen nothing to be compared to it in any other country. . . .

At nine o'clock we went and saw the king, queen, and royal family, at the *grand couvert*. Whether M. François, a gentleman who undertook upon this occasion to conduct us, had contrived a plot to gratify the curiosity of the spectators, or whether the royal family had a fancy to see the raw American at their leisure, or whether they were willing to gratify him with a convenient seat, in which he might see all the royal family, and all the splendors of the place, I know not; but the scheme could not have been carried into execution, certainly, without the orders of the king. I was selected, and summoned indeed, from all my company, and ordered to a seat close beside the royal family. The seats on both sides of the hall, arranged like the seats in a theatre, were all full of ladies of the first rank and fashion in the kingdom, and there was no room or place for me but in the midst of them. It was not easy to make room for one more person. However, room was made, and I was situated between two ladies, with rows and ranks of ladies above and below me, and on the right hand and on the left, and ladies only. My dress was a decent French dress, becoming the station I held, but not to be compared with the gold, and diamonds, and embroidery, about me. I could neither speak nor understand the language in a manner to support a conversation, but I had soon the satisfaction to find it was a silent meeting, and that nobody spoke a word but the royal family to each other, and they said very little. The eyes of all the assembly were turned upon me, and I felt sufficiently humble and mortified, for I was not a proper object for the criticisms of such a company. I found myself gazed at, as we in America used to gaze at the sachems who came to make speeches to us in Congress; but I thought it very hard if I could not command as much power of face as one of the chiefs of the Six Nations, and therefore determined that I would assume a cheerful countenance, enjoy the scene around me, and observe it as coolly as an astronomer contemplates the stars. Inscriptions of *Fructus Belli* were seen on the ceiling and all about the walls of the room, among paintings of the trophies of war; probably done by the order of Louis XIV., who confessed in his dying hour, as his successor and exemplar Napoleon will probably do, that he had been too fond of war. The king was the royal carver for himself and all his family. His majesty ate like a king, and made a royal supper of solid beef, and other things in proportion. The queen took a large spoonful of soup, and displayed her fine person and graceful manners, in alternately looking at the company in various parts of the hall, and ordering several kinds of seasoning to be brought to her, by which she fitted her supper to her taste.]

THE CHARACTER OF FRANKLIN

From Letter to the Boston Patriot, May 15th, 1811

FRANKLIN had a great genius, original, sagacious, and inventive, capable of discoveries in science no less than of improvements in the fine arts and the mechanic arts. He had a vast imagination, equal to the comprehension of the greatest objects, and capable of a cool and steady comprehension of them.

He had wit at will. He had humor that when he pleased was delicate and delightful. He had a satire that was good-natured or caustic, Horace or Juvenal, Swift or Rabelais, at his pleasure. He had talents for irony, allegory, and fable, that he could adapt with great skill to the promotion of moral and political truth. He was master of that infantine simplicity which the French call *naïveté*, which never fails to charm in Phædrus and La Fontaine, from the cradle to the grave. Had he been blessed with the same advantages of scholastic education in his early youth, and pursued a course of studies as unembarrassed with occupations of public and private life as Sir Isaac Newton, he might have emulated the first philosopher. Although I am not ignorant that most of his positions and hypotheses have been controverted, I cannot but think he has added much to the mass of natural knowledge, and contributed largely to the progress of the human mind, both by his own writings and by the controversies and experiments he has excited in all parts of Europe. He had abilities for investigating statistical questions, and in some parts of his life has written pamphlets and essays upon public topics with great ingenuity and success; but after my acquaintance with him, which commenced in Congress in 1775, his excellence as a legislator, a politician, or a negotiator most certainly never appeared. No sentiment more weak and superficial was ever avowed by the most absurd philosopher than some of his, particularly one that he procured to be inserted in the first constitution of Pennsylvania, and for which he had such a fondness as to insert it in his will. I call it weak, for so it must have been, or hypocritical; unless he meant by one satiric touch to ridicule his own republic, or throw it into everlasting contempt.

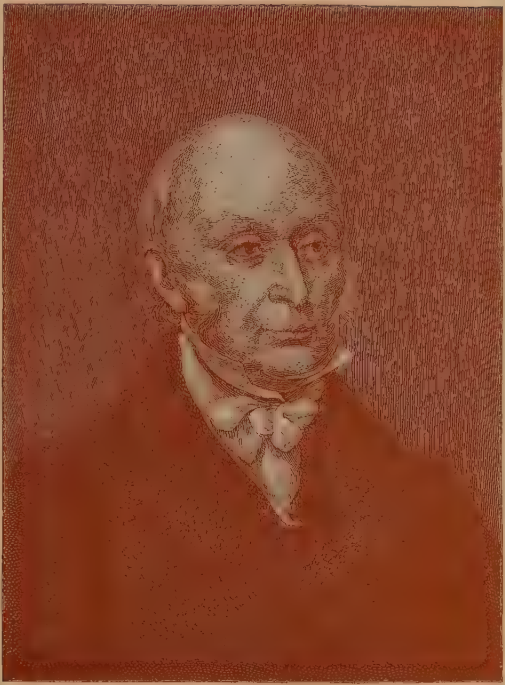
I must acknowledge, after all, that nothing in life has mortified or grieved me more than the necessity which compelled me to oppose him so often as I have. He was a man with whom I always wished to live in friendship, and for that purpose omitted no demonstration of respect, esteem, and veneration in my power, until I had unequivocal proofs of his hatred, for no other reason under the sun but because I gave my judgment in opposition to his in many points which materially affected the interests of our country, and in many more which essentially concerned our happiness, safety, and well-being. I could not and would not sacrifice the clearest dictates of my understanding and the purest principles of morals and policy in compliance to Dr. Franklin.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

(1767–1848)

The chief distinction in character between John Adams and his son is the strangest one imaginable, when one remembers that to the fiery, combative, bristling Adams blood was added an equal strain from the gay, genial, affectionate Abigail Smith. The son, though of deep inner affections, and even hungering for good-will if it would come without his help, was on the surface incomparably colder, harsher, and thornier than his father, with all the socially repellent traits of the race and none of the softer ones. The father could never control his tongue or his temper, and not always his head; the son never lost the bridle of either, and much of his terrible power in debate came from his ability to make others lose theirs while perfectly keeping his own. The father had plenty of warm friends and allies,— at the worst he worked with half a party; the son in the most superb part of his career had no friends, no allies, no party except the group of constituents who kept him in Congress. The father's self-confidence deepened in the son to a solitary and even contemptuous gladiatorship against the entire government of the country, for long years of hate and peril. The father's irritable though generous vanity changed in the son to an icy contempt or white-hot scorn of nearly all around him. The father's spasms of acrimonious judgment steadied in the son to a constant rancor always finding new objects. But only John Quincy Adams could have done the work awaiting John Quincy Adams, and each of his unamiable qualities strengthened his fibre to do it. And if a man is to be judged by his fruits, Mr. Morse is justified in saying that he was "not only pre-eminent in ability and acquirements, but even more to be honored for profound, immutable honesty of purpose, and broad, noble humanity of aims."

It might almost be said that the fifth President of the United States was cradled in statesmanship. Born July 11th, 1767, he was a little lad of ten when he accompanied his father on the French mission. Eighteen months elapsed before he returned, and three months later he was again upon the water, bound once more for the French capital. There were school days in Paris, and other school days in Amsterdam and in Leyden; but the boy was only fourteen,— the mature old child!— when he went to St. Petersburg as private secretary and interpreter to Francis Dana, just appointed minister plenipotentiary to the court of the Empress Catherine. Such was his apprenticeship to a public career which began in earnest in 1794, and lasted,



JOHN Q. ADAMS.

with slight interruptions, for fifty-four years. Minister to the United Netherlands, to Russia, to Prussia, and to England; commissioner to frame the Treaty of Ghent which ended the war of 1812; State Senator, United States Senator; Secretary of State, a position in which he made the treaty with Spain which conceded Florida, and enunciated the Monroe Doctrine before Monroe and far more thoroughly than he; President, and then for many years Member of the National House of Representatives,—it is strange to find this man writing in his later years, «My whole life has been a succession of disappointments. I can scarcely recollect a single instance of success to anything that I ever undertook.»

It is true, however, that his successes and even his glories always had some bitter ingredient to spoil their flavor. As United States Senator he was practically «boycotted,» for years, even by his own party members, because he was an Adams. In 1807 he definitely broke with the Federalist party—for what he regarded as its slavish crouching under English outrages, conduct which had been for years estranging him—by supporting Jefferson's Embargo, as better than no show of resistance at all; and was for a generation denounced by the New England Federalists as a renegade for the sake of office and a traitor to New England. The Massachusetts Legislature practically censured him in 1808, and he resigned.

His winning of the Presidency brought pain instead of pleasure: he valued it only as a token of national confidence, got it only as a minority candidate in a divided party, and was denounced by the Jacksonians as a corrupt political bargainer. And his later Congressional career, though his chief title to glory, was one long martyrdom (even though its worst pains were self-inflicted), and he never knew the immense victory he had actually won. The «old man eloquent,» after ceasing to be President, was elected in 1830 by his home district a Representative in Congress, and regularly re-elected till his death. For a long time he bore the anti-slavery standard almost alone in the halls of Congress, a unique and picturesque figure, rousing every demon of hatred in his fellow-members, in constant and envenomed battle with them, and more than a match for them all. He fought single-handed for the right of petition as an indefeasible right, not hesitating to submit a petition from citizens of Virginia praying for his own expulsion from Congress as a nuisance. In 1836 he presented a petition from one hundred and fifty-eight ladies, citizens of Massachusetts, «for, I said, I had not yet brought myself to doubt whether females were citizens.» After eight years of persistent struggle against the «Atherton gag law,» which practically denied the right of petition in matters relating to slavery, he carried a vote rescinding it, and nothing of the kind was again enacted. He had a fatal stroke of paralysis on the floor of Congress February 21st, 1848, and died two days later.

As a writer he was perspicuous, vigorous, and straightforward. He had entered Harvard in the middle of the college course, and been graduated with honors. He had then studied and practiced law. He was Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard from 1806 to 1809, and was well drilled in the use of language, but was too downright in his temper and purposes to spend much labor upon artistic effects. He kept an elaborate diary during the greater part of his life,—since published in twelve volumes of «Memoirs» by his son Charles Francis Adams; a vast storehouse of material relating to the political history of the country, but, as published, largely restricted to public affairs. He delivered orations on Lafayette, on Madison, on Monroe, on Independence, and on the Constitution; published essays on the Masonic Institution and various other matters; a report on weights and measures, of enormous labor and permanent value; Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory; a tale in verse on the Conquest of Ireland, with the title 'Dermot MacMorrogh'; an account of Travels in Silesia; and a volume of 'Poems of Religion and Society.' He had some facility in rhyme, but his judgment was not at fault in informing him that he was not a poet. Mr. Morse says that «No man can have been more utterly void of a sense of humor or an appreciation of wit»; and yet he very fairly anticipated Holmes in his poem on 'The Wants of Man,' and hits rather neatly a familiar foible in the verse with which he begins 'Dermot MacMorrogh':—

«'Tis strange how often readers will indulge
Their wits a mystic meaning to discover;
Secrets ne'er dreamt of by the bard divulge,
And where he shoots a duck, will find a plover;
Satiric shafts from every line promulge,
Detect a tyrant where he draws a lover:
Nay, so intent his hidden thoughts to see,
Cry, if he paint a scoundrel—'That means me.'»

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LETTER TO HIS FATHER

(At the Age of Ten)

Dear Sir,—I love to receive letters very well; much better than I love to write them. I make but a poor figure at composition, my head is too fickle, my thoughts are running after birds eggs play and trifles, till I get vexed with myself. Mamma has a troublesome task to keep me steady, and I own I am ashamed of myself. I have but just entered the third volume of Smollett, tho' I had designed to have got it half through by this time. I have determined this week to be more diligent, as Mr. Thaxter will be absent at Court, and I cannot pursue my other studies. I have Set myself a Stent and determine to read the 3rd volume Half out. If I can but keep my resolution, I will write again at the end of the week and give a better account of myself. I wish, Sir, you would give me some instructions, with regard to my time, and advise me how to proportion my Studies and my Play, in writing, and I will keep them by me, and endeavor to follow them. I am, dear Sir, with a present determination of growing better, yours.

P. S.—Sir, if you will be so good as to favor me with a Blank Book, I will transcribe the most remarkable occurances I meet with in my reading, which will serve to fix them upon my mind.

FROM THE MEMOIRS

(At the Age of Eighteen)

APRIL 26TH, 1785.—A letter from Mr. Gerry of Feb. 25th Says that Mr. Adams is appointed Minister to the Court of London.

I believe he will promote the interests of the United States, as much as any man, but I fear his duty will induce him to make exertions which may be detrimental to his health. I wish however it may be otherwise. Were I now to go with him, probably my immediate satisfaction might be greater than it will be in returning to America. After having been traveling for these seven years almost all over Europe, and having been in the World, and among company, for three; to return to spend one or two years in the pale of a College, subjected to all the rules which I have so long been freed from; then to plunge into the dry and tedious study of the Law for three years; and afterwards not expect (however good an opinion I may have of myself) to bring myself into notice under three or four years more; if ever! It is really a prospect somewhat discouraging for a youth of my ambition (for I have ambition, though I hope its object is laudable). But still

«Oh! how wretched
Is that poor Man, that hangs on Princes' favors»

or on those of anybody else. I am determined that so long as I shall be able to get my own living in an honorable manner, I will depend upon no one. My Father has been so much taken up all his lifetime with the interests of the public, that his own fortune has suffered by it; so that his children will have to provide for themselves, which I shall never be able to do, if I loiter away my precious time in Europe and shun going home until I am forced to it. With an ordinary share of Common sense which I hope I enjoy, at least in America I can live *independent* and *free;* and rather than live otherwise I would wish to die before the time when I shall be left at my own discretion. I have before me a striking example of the distressing and humiliating situation a person is reduced to by adopting a different line of conduct, and I am determined not to fall into the same error.

FROM THE MEMOIRS

JANUARY 14TH, 1831.—I received a letter from John C. Calhoun, now Vice-President of the United States, relating to his present controversy with President Jackson and William H. Crawford. He questions me concerning the letter of General Jackson to Mr. Monroe which Crawford alleges to have been produced at the Cabinet meetings on the Seminole War, and asks for copies, if I think proper to give them, of Crawford's letter to me which I received last summer, and of my answer. I answered Mr. Calhoun's letter immediately, rigorously confining myself to the direct object of his inquiries. This is a new bursting out of the old and rancorous feud between Crawford and Calhoun, both parties to which, after suspending their animosities and combining together to effect my ruin, are appealing to me for testimony to sustain themselves each against the other. This is one of the occasions upon which I shall eminently need the direction of a higher power to guide me in every step of my conduct. I see my duty to discard all consideration of their treatment of me; to adhere, in everything that I shall say or write, to the truth; to assert nothing positively of which I am not absolutely certain; to deny nothing upon which there remains a scruple of doubt upon my memory; to conceal nothing which it may be lawful to divulge, and which may promote truth and justice between the parties. With these principles, I see further the necessity for caution and prudence in the course I shall take. The bitter enmity of all three of the parties—Jackson, Calhoun, and Crawford—against me, an enmity the more virulent because kindled by their own ingratitude and injustice to me; the interest which every one of them, and all their partisans, have in keeping up that load of obloquy and public odium which their foul calumnies have brought down upon me; and the disfavor in which I stand before a majority of the people, excited against me by their artifices;—their demerits to me are proportioned to the obligations to me—Jackson's the greatest, Crawford's the next, Calhoun's the least of positive obligation, but darkened by his double-faced setting himself up as a candidate for the Presidency against me in 1821, his prevarications between Jackson and me in 1824, and his icy-hearted dereliction of all the decencies of social intercourse with me, solely from the terror of Jackson, since the 4th of March, 1829. I walk between burning ploughshares; let me be mindful where I place my foot.

FROM THE MEMOIRS

JUNE 7TH, 1833.—The first seedling apple-tree that I had observed on my return here just out of the ground was on the 22d of April. It had grown slowly but constantly since, and had put out five or six leaves. Last evening, after my return from Boston, I saw it perfectly sound. This morning I found it broken off, leaving one lobe of the seed-leaves, and one leaf over it. This may have been the work of a bug, or perhaps of a caterpillar. It would not be imaginable to any person free from hobby-horse or fanciful attachments, how much mortification such an incident occasions. St. Evremond, after removing into the country, returned to a city life because he found himself in despair for the loss of a pigeon. His conclusion was, that rural life induced exorbitant attachment to insignificant objects. My experience is conformable to this. My natural propensity was to raise trees, fruit and forest, from the seed. I had it in early youth, but the course of my life deprived me of the means of pursuing the bent of my inclination. One shellbark-walnut-tree in my garden, the root of which I planted 8th October, 1804, and one Mazzard cherry-tree in the grounds north of the house, the stone of which I planted about the same time, are the only remains of my experiments of so ancient a date. Had my life been spent in the country, and my experiments commenced while I was at College, I should now have a large fruit garden, flourishing orchards of native fruit, and very valuable forests; instead of which I have a nursery of about half an acre of ground, half full of seedlings, from five years to five days old, bearing for the first time perhaps twenty peaches, and a few blossoms of apricots and cherries; and hundreds of seedlings of the present year perishing from day to day before my eyes.

FROM THE MEMOIRS

SEPTEMBER 9TH, 1833. — Cold and cloudy day, clearing off toward evening. In the multitudinous whimseys of a disabled mind and body, the thick-coming fancies often come to me that the events which affect my life and adventures are specially shaped to disappoint my purposes. My whole life has been a succession of disappointments. I can scarcely recollect a single instance of success to anything that I ever undertook. Yet, with fervent gratitude to God, I confess that my life has been equally marked by great and signal successes which I neither aimed at nor anticipated. Fortune, by which I understand Providence, has showered blessings upon me profusely. But they have been blessings unforeseen and unsought. "Non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam!" I ought to have been taught by it three lessons: — 1. Of implicit reliance upon Providence. 2. Of humility and humiliation; the thorough conviction of my own impotence to accomplish anything. 3. Of resignation; and not to set my heart upon anything which can be taken from me or denied.

THE MISSION OF AMERICA

From his Fourth of July Oration at Washington, 1821

AND now, friends and countrymen, if the wise and learned philosophers of the older world, the first observers of nutation and aberration, the discoverers of maddening ether and invisible planets, the inventors of Congreve rockets and shrapnel shells, should find their hearts disposed to inquire, What has America done for mankind? let our answer be this: — America, with the same voice which spoke herself into existence as a nation, proclaimed to mankind the inextinguishable rights of human nature, and the only lawful foundations of government. America, in the assembly of nations, since her admission among them, has invariably, though often fruitlessly, held forth to them the hand of honest friendship, of equal freedom, of generous reciprocity. She has uniformly spoken among them, though often to heedless and often to disdainful ears, the language of equal liberty, equal justice, and equal rights. She has, in the lapse of nearly half a century, without a single exception, respected the independence of other nations, while asserting and maintaining her own. She has abstained from interference in the concerns of others, even when the conflict has been for principles to which she clings, as to the last vital drop that visits the heart. She has seen that probably for centuries to come, all the contests of that Aceldama, the European World, will be contests between inveterate power and emerging right. Wherever the standard of freedom and independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will her heart, her benedictions, and her prayers be. But she goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. She will recommend the general cause, by the countenance of her voice, and the benignant sympathy of her example. She well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign independence, she would involve herself, beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom. The fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force. The frontlet upon her brows would no longer beam with the ineffable splendor of freedom and independence; but in its stead would soon be substituted an imperial diadem, flashing in false and tarnished lustre the murky radiance of dominion and power. She might become the dictatress of the world; she would no longer be the ruler of her own spirit.

THE RIGHT OF PETITION

Quoted in Memoir by Josiah Quincy

SIR, it is . . . well known that, from the time I entered this house, down to the present day, I have felt it a sacred duty to present any petition, couched in respectful language, from any citizen of the United States, be its object what it may, — be the prayer of it that in which I could concur, or that to which I was utterly opposed. I adhere to the right of petition; and let me say here that, let the petition be, as the gentleman from Virginia has stated, from free negroes, prostitutes, as he supposes, — for he says there is one put on this paper, and he infers that the rest are of the same description, — *that* has not altered my opinion at all. Where is your law that says that the mean, the low, and the degraded, shall be deprived of the right of petition, if their moral character is not good? Where, in the land of freemen, was the right of petition ever placed on the exclusive basis of morality and virtue? Petition is supplication — it is entreaty — it is prayer! And where is the degree of vice or immorality which shall deprive the citizen of the right to supplicate for a boon, or to pray for mercy? Where is such a law to be found? It does not belong to the most abject despotism. There is no absolute monarch on earth who is not compelled, by the constitution of his country, to receive the petitions of his people, whosoever they may be. The Sultan of Constantinople cannot walk the streets and refuse to receive petitions from the meanest and vilest in the land. This is the law even of despotism; and what does your law say? Does it say, that, before presenting a petition, you shall look into it and see whether it comes from the virtuous, and the great, and the mighty? No, sir; it says no such thing. The right of petition belongs to all; and so far from refusing to present a petition because it might come from those low in the estimation of the world, it would be an additional incentive, if such an incentive were wanting.

NULLIFICATION

From his Fourth of July Oration at Quincy, 1831

NULLIFICATION is the provocation to that brutal and foul contest of force, which has hitherto baffled all the efforts of the European and Southern American nations, to introduce among them constitutional governments of liberty and order. It strips us of that peculiar and unimitated characteristic of all our legislation — free debate; it makes the bayonet the arbiter of law; it has no argument but the thunderbolt. It were senseless to imagine that twenty-three States of the Union would suffer their laws to be trampled upon by the despotic mandate of one. The act of nullification would itself be null and void. Force must be called in to execute the law of the Union. Force must be applied by the nullifying State to resist its execution—

> "Ate, hot from Hell,
> Cries Havoc! and lets slip the dogs of war."

The blood of brethren is shed by each other. The citizen of the nullifying State is a traitor to his country, by obedience to the law of his State; a traitor to his State, by obedience to the law of his country. The scaffold and the battle-field stream alternately with the blood of their victims. Let this agent but once intrude upon your deliberations, and Freedom will take her flight for heaven. The Declaration of Independence will become a philosophical dream, and uncontrolled, despotic sovereignties will trample with impunity, through a long career of after ages, at interminable or exterminating war with one another, upon the indefeasible and unalienable rights of man.

The event of a conflict of arms, between the Union and one of its members, whether terminating in victory or defeat, would be but an alternative of calamity to all. In the holy records of antiquity, we have two examples of a confederation ruptured by the severance of its members; one of which resulted, after three desperate battles, in the extermination of the seceding tribe. And the victorious people, instead of exulting in shouts of triumph, "came to the House of God, and abode there till even before God; and lifted up their voices, and wept sore, and said,—O Lord God of Israel, *why* is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to-day one tribe lacking in Israel?" The other was a successful example of resistance against tyrannical taxation, and severed forever the confederacy, the fragments forming separate kingdoms; and from that day, their history presents an unbroken series of disastrous alliances and exterminating wars—of assassinations, conspiracies, revolts, and rebellions, until both parts of the confederacy sunk in tributary servitude to the nations around them; till the countrymen of David and Solomon hung their harps upon the willows of Babylon, and were totally lost among the multitudes of the Chaldean and Assyrian monarchies, "the most despised portion of their slaves."

In these mournful memorials of their fate, we may behold the sure, too sure prognostication of our own, from the hour when force shall be substituted for deliberation in the settlement of our Constitutional questions. This is the deplorable alternative

— the extirpation of the seceding member, or the never-ceasing struggle of two rival confederacies, ultimately bending the neck of both under the yoke of foreign domination, or the despotic sovereignty of a conqueror at home. May Heaven avert the omen! The destinies of not only our posterity, but of the human race, are at stake.

Let no such melancholy forebodings intrude upon the festivities of this anniversary. Serene skies and balmy breezes are not congenial to the climate of freedom. Progressive improvement in the condition of man is apparently the purpose of a superintending Providence. That purpose will not be disappointed. In no delusion of national vanity, but with a feeling of profound gratitude to the God of our Fathers, let us indulge the cheering hope and belief, that our country and her people have been selected as instruments for preparing and maturing much of the good yet in reserve for the welfare and happiness of the human race. Much good has already been effected by the solemn proclamation of our principles, much more by the illustration of our example. The tempest which threatens desolation, may be destined only to purify the atmosphere. It is not in tranquil ease and enjoyment that the active energies of mankind are displayed. Toils and dangers are the trials of the soul. Doomed to the first by his sentence at the fall, man, by his submission, converts them into pleasures. The last are since the fall the condition of his existence. To see them in advance, to guard against them by all the suggestions of prudence, to meet them with the composure of unyielding resistance, and to abide with firm resignation the final dispensation of Him who rules the ball, — these are the dictates of philosophy — these are the precepts of religion — these are the principles and consolations of patriotism; these remain when all is lost — and of these is composed the spirit of independence — the spirit embodied in that beautiful personification of the poet, which may each of you, my countrymen, to the last hour of his life, apply to himself: —

"Thy spirit, Independence, let me share,
Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye!
Thy steps I follow, with my bosom bare,
Nor heed the storm that howls along the sky."

In the course of nature, the voice which now addresses you must soon cease to be heard upon earth. Life and all which it inherits, lose of their value as it draws toward its close. But for most of you, my friends and neighbors, long and many years of futurity are yet in store. May they be years of freedom — years of prosperity — years of happiness, ripening for immortality! But, were the breath which now gives utterance to my feelings, the last vital air I should draw, my expiring words to you and your children should be, Independence and Union forever!

SARAH FLOWER ADAMS

(1805—1848)

This English poet, whose hymn, 'Nearer, my God, to Thee,' is known wherever the English language is spoken, was born at Great Harlow, Essex, England, in 1805. She was the daughter of Benjamin Flower, who in 1799 was prosecuted for plain speaking in his paper, the Cambridge Intelligencer. From the outcome of his trial is to be dated the liberty of political discussion in England. Her mother was Eliza Gould, who first met her future husband in jail, whither she had gone on a visit to assure him of her sympathy. She also had suffered for liberal opinions. From their parents two daughters inherited a distinguished nobility and purity of character. Eliza excelled in the composition of music for congregational worship, and arranged a musical service for the Unitarian South Place Chapel, London. Sarah contributed first to the Monthly Repository, conducted by W. J. Fox, her Unitarian pastor, in whose family she lived after her father's death. In 1834 she married William Bridges Adams. Her delicate health gave way under the shock of her sister's death in 1846, and she died of decline in 1848.

Her poetic genius found expression both in the drama and in hymns. Her play, 'Vivia Perpetua' (1841), tells of the author's rapt aspiration after an ideal, symbolized in a pagan's conversion to Christianity. She published also 'The Royal Progress,' a ballad (1845), on the giving up of the feudal privileges of the Isle of Wight to Edward I.; and poems upon the humanitarian interests which the Anti-Corn-Law League endeavored to further. Her hymns are the happiest expressions of the religious trust, resignation, and sweetness of her nature.

'Nearer, my God, to Thee,' was written for the South Place Chapel service. There are stories of its echoes having been heard from a dilapidated log cabin in Arkansas, from a remote corner of the north of England, and from the Heights of Benjamin in the Holy

Land. But even its devotion and humility have not escaped censure — arising, perhaps, from denominational bias. The fault found with it is the fault of Addison's 'How are thy servants blessed, O Lord,' and the fault of the Psalmody begun by Sternhold and Hopkins, which, published in Geneva in 1556, electrified the congregation of six thousand souls in Elizabeth's reign,— it has no direct reference to Jesus. Compilers of hymn-books have sought to rectify what they deem a lapse in Christian spirit by the substitution of a verse begining "Christ alone beareth me." But the quality of the interpolated verse is so inferior to the lyric itself that it has not found general acceptance. Others, again, with an excess of zeal, have endeavored to substitute "the Cross" for "a cross" in the first stanza.

An even share of its extraordinary vogue must in bare justice be credited to the tune which Dr. Lowell Mason has made an inseparable part of it; though this does not detract in the least from its own high merit, or its capacity to satisfy the feelings of a devout soul. A taking melody is the first condition of even the loveliest song's obtaining popularity; and this hymn was sung for many years to various tunes, including chants, with no general recognition of its quality. It was Dr. Mason's tune, written about 1860, which sent it at once into the hearts of the people; it is never thought of apart from that melody, and will never be sung to any other.

HE SENDETH SUN, HE SENDETH SHOWER

HE SENDETH sun, he sendeth shower,
Alike they're needful to the flower;
And joys and tears alike are sent
To give the soul fit nourishment.
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father! thy will, not mine, be done.

Can loving children e'er reprove
With murmurs, whom they trust and love?
Creator, I would ever be
A trusting, loving child to thee:
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father! thy will, not mine, be done.

Oh, ne'er will I at life repine, —
Enough that thou hast made it mine.
When falls the shadow cold of death,
I yet will sing with parting breath,
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father! thy will, not mine, be done.

NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE

NEARER, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,—
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!

Though, like a wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!

There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven;
All that thou sendest me
In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!

Then with my waking thoughts
Bright with thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I'll raise;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!

Or if on joyful wing,
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upward I fly;
Still all my song shall be,—
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!

From ‹Adoration, Aspiration, and Belief.›

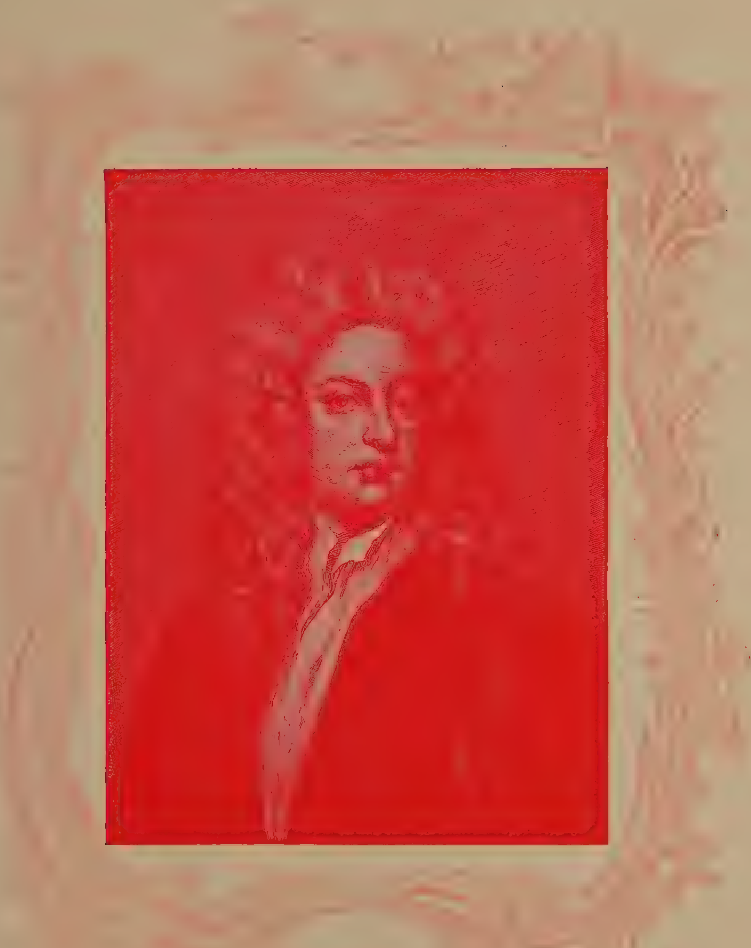
JOSEPH ADDISON

(1672-1720)

BY HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE

There are few figures in literary history more dignified and attractive than Joseph Addison; few men more eminently representative, not only of literature as a profession, but of literature as an art. It has happened more than once that literary gifts of a high order have been lodged in very frail moral tenements; that taste, feeling, and felicity of expression have been divorced from general intellectual power, from intimate acquaintance with the best in thought and art, from grace of manner and dignity of life. There have been writers of force and originality who failed to attain a representative eminence, to identify themselves with their art in the memory of the world. There have been other writers without claim to the possession of gifts of the highest order, who have secured this distinction by virtue of harmony of character and work, of breadth of interest, and of that fine intelligence which instinctively allies itself with the best in its time. Of this class Addison is an illustrious example. His gifts are not of the highest order; there was none of the spontaneity, abandon, or fertility of genius in him; his thought made no lasting contribution to the highest intellectual life; he set no pulses beating by his eloquence of style, and fired no imagination by the insight and emotion of his verse; he was not a scholar in the technical sense: and yet, in an age which was stirred and stung by the immense satiric force of Swift, charmed by the wit and elegance of Pope, moved by the tenderness of Steele, and enchanted by the fresh realism of De Foe, Addison holds the most representative place. He is, above all others, the Man of Letters of his time; his name instantly evokes the literature of his period.

Born in the rectory at Milston, Wiltshire, on May Day, 1672, it was Addison's fortune to take up the profession of Letters at the very moment when it was becoming a recognized profession, with a field of its own, and with emoluments sufficient in kind to make decency of living possible, and so related to a man's work that their acceptance involved loss neither of dignity nor of independence. He was contemporary with the first English publisher, Jacob Tonson. He was also contemporary with the notable reorganization of English prose which freed it from exaggeration, complexity, and obscurity; and he contributed not a little to the flexibility, charm, balance, and ease which have since characterized its best examples. He saw the



JOSEPH ADDISON.

rise of polite society in its modern sense; the development of the social resources of the city; the enlargement of what is called «the reading class» to embrace all classes in the community and all orders in the nation. And he was one of the first, following the logic of a free press, an organized business for the sale of books, and the appearance of popular interest in literature, to undertake that work of translating the best thought, feeling, sentiment, and knowledge of his time, and of all times, into the language of the drawing-room, the club, and the street, which has done so much to humanize and civilize the modern world.

To recognize these various opportunities, to feel intuitively the drift of sentiment and conviction, and so to adjust the uses of art to life as to exalt the one, and enrich and refine the other, involved not only the possession of gifts of a high order, but that training which puts a man in command of himself and of his materials. Addison was fortunate in that incomparably important education which assails a child through every sense, and above all through the imagination—in the atmosphere of a home, frugal in its service to the body, but prodigal in its ministry to the spirit. His father was a man of generous culture: an Oxford scholar, who had stood frankly for the Monarchy and Episcopacy in Puritan times; a voluminous and agreeable writer; of whom Steele says that he bred his five children «with all the care imaginable in a liberal and generous way.» From this most influential of schools Addison passed on to other masters: from the Grammar School at Lichfield, to the well-known Charter House; and thence to Oxford, where he first entered Queen's College, and later, became a member of Magdalen, to the beauty of whose architecture and natural situation the tradition of his walks and personality adds no small charm. He was a close student, shy in manner, given to late hours of work. His literary tastes and appetite were early disclosed, and in his twenty-second year he was already known in London, had written an 'Account of the Greatest English Poets,' and had addressed some complimentary verses to Dryden, then the recognized head of English Letters.

While Addison was hesitating what profession to follow, the leaders of the political parties were casting about for men of literary power. A new force had appeared in English politics—the force of public opinion; and in their experiments to control and direct this novel force, politicians were eager to secure the aid of men of Letters. The shifting of power to the House of Commons involved a radical readjustment, not only of the mechanism of political action, but of the attitude of public men to the nation. They felt the need of trained and persuasive interpreters and advocates; of the resources of wit, satire, and humor. It was this very practical service which literature was in the way of rendering to political parties, rather than any deep regard for literature itself, which brought about a brief but brilliant alliance between groups of men who have not often worked together to mutual advantage. It must be said, however, that there was among the great Whig and Tory leaders of the time a certain liberality of taste, and a care for those things which give public life dignity and elegance, which were entirely absent from Robert Walpole and the leaders of the two succeeding reigns, when literature and politics were completely divorced, and the government knew little and cared less for the welfare of the arts. Addison came on the stage at the very moment when the government was not only ready but eager to foster such talents as his. He was a Whig of pronounced although modern type, and the Whigs were in power.

Lord Somers and Charles Montagu, better known later as Lord Halifax, were the heads of the ministry, and his personal friends as well. They were men of culture, lovers of Letters, and not unappreciative of the personal distinction which already stamped the studious and dignified Magdalen scholar. A Latin poem on the Peace of Ryswick, dedicated to Montagu, happily combined Virgilian elegance and felicity with Whig sentiment and achievement. It confirmed the judgment already formed of Addison's ability; and, setting aside with friendly insistence the plan of putting that ability into the service of the Church, Montagu secured a pension of £300 for the purpose of enabling Addison to fit himself for public employment abroad by thorough study of the French language, and of manners, methods, and institutions on the Continent. With eight Latin poems, published in the second volume of the 'Musæ Anglicanæ,' as an introduction to foreign scholars, and armed with letters of introduction from Montagu to many distinguished personages, Addison left Oxford in the summer of 1599, and, after a prolonged stay at Blois for purposes of study, visited many cities and interesting localities in France, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, and Holland. The shy, reticent, but observing young traveler was everywhere received with the courtesy which early in the century had made so deep an impression on the young Milton. He studied hard, saw much, and meditated more. He was not only fitting himself for public service, but for that delicate portraiture of manners which was later to become his distinctive work. Clarendon had already drawn a series of lifelike portraits of men of action in the stormy period of the Revolution: Addison was to sketch the society of his time with a touch at once delicate and firm; to exhibit its life in those aspects which emphasize individual humor and personal quality, against a carefully wrought background of habit, manners, usage, and social condition. The habit of observation and the wide acquaintance with cultivated and elegant social life which was a necessary part of the training for the work which was later to appear in the pages of the Spectator, were perhaps the richest educational results of these years of travel and study; for Addison the official is a comparatively obscure figure, but Addison the writer is one of the most admirable and attractive figures in English history.

Addison returned to England in 1703 with clouded prospects. The accession of Queen Anne had been followed by the dismissal of the Whigs from office; his pension was stopped, his opportunity of advancement gone, and his father dead. The skies soon brightened, however: the support of the Whigs became necessary to the Government; the brilliant victory of Blenheim shed lustre not only on Marlborough, but on the men with whom he was politically affiliated; and there was great dearth of poetic ability in the Tory ranks at the very moment when a notable achievement called for brave and splendid verse. Lord Godolphin, that easy-going and eminently successful politician of whom Charles the Second once shrewdly said that he was «never in the way and never out of it,» was directed to Addison in this emergency; and the story goes that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, afterward Lord Carleton, who was sent to express to the needy scholar the wishes of the Government, found him lodged in a garret over a small shop. The result of this memorable embassy from politics to literature was ‹The Campaign›: an eminently successful poem of the formal, «occasional» order, which celebrated the victor of Blenheim with tact and taste, pleased the ministry, delighted the public, and brought reputation and fortune to its unknown writer. Its excellence is in skillful avoidance of fulsome adulation, in the exclusion of the well-worn classical allusions, and in a straightforward celebration of those really great qualities in Marlborough which set his military career in brilliant contrast with his private life. The poem closed with a simile which took the world by storm:—

> «So when an angel, by divine command,
> With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
> (Such as of late o'er pale Britannia passed,)
> Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;
> And, pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,
> Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.»

«Addison left off at a good moment,» says Thackeray. «That simile was pronounced to be the greatest ever produced in poetry. That angel, that good angel, flew off with Mr. Addison, and landed him in the place of Commissioner of Appeals—*vice* Mr. Locke, providentially promoted. In the following year Mr. Addison went to Hanover with Lord Halifax, and the year after was made Under-Secretary of State. O angel visits! You come ‹few and far between› to literary gentlemen's lodgings! Your wings seldom quiver at the second-floor windows now!»

The prize poem was followed by a narrative of travel in Italy, happily written, full of felicitous description, and touched by a humor which, in quality and manner, was new to English readers. Then came one of those indiscretions of the imagination which showed that the dignified and somewhat sober young poet, the «parson in a tye-wig,» as he was called at a later day, was not lacking in gayety of mood. The opera 'Rosamond' was not a popular success, mainly because the music to which it was set fell so far below it in grace and ease. It must be added, however, that Addison lacked the qualities of a successful libretto writer. He was too serious, and despite the lightness of his touch, there was a certain rigidity in him which made him unapt at versification which required quickness, agility, and variety. When he attempted to give his verse gayety of manner, he did not get beyond awkward simulation of an ease which nature had denied him:—

«Since conjugal passion
Is come into fashion,
And marriage so blest on the throne is,
Like a Venus I'll shine,
Be fond and be fine,
And Sir Trusty shall be my Adonis.»

Meantime, in spite of occasional clouds, Addison's fortunes were steadily advancing. The Earl of Wharton was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Addison accepted the lucrative post of Secretary. Spenser had found time and place, during a similar service in the same country, to complete the 'Faery Queene'; although the fair land in which the loveliest of English poems has its action was not unvexed by the chronic turbulence of a mercurial and badly used race. Irish residence was coincident in Addison's case, not only with prosperous fortunes and with important friendships, but also with the beginning of the work on which his fame securely rests. In Ireland the acquaintance he had already made in London with Swift ripened into a generous friendship, which for a time resisted political differences when such differences were the constant occasion of personal animosity and bitterness. The two men represented the age in an uncommonly complete way. Swift had the greater genius: he was, indeed, in respect of natural endowment, the foremost man of his time; but his nature was undisciplined, his temper uncertain, and his great powers quite as much at the service of his passions as of his principles. He made himself respected, feared, and finally hated; his lack of restraint and balance, his ferocity of spirit when opposed, and the violence with which he assailed his enemies, neutralized his splendid gifts, marred his fortune, and sent him into lonely exile at Dublin, where he longed for the ampler world of London. Few figures in literary history are more pathetic than that of the old Dean of St. Patrick's, broken in spirit, failing in health, his noble faculties gone into premature decay, forsaken, bitter, and remorseful. At the time of Addison's stay in Ireland, the days of Swift's eclipse were, however, far distant; both men were in their prime. That Swift loved Addison is clear enough; and it is easy to understand the qualities which made Addison one of the most deeply loved men of his time. He was of an eminently social temper, although averse to large companies and shy and silent in their presence. « There is no such thing,» he once said, «as real conversation but between two persons.» He was free from malice, meanness, or jealousy, Pope to the contrary notwithstanding. He was absolutely loyal to his principles and to his friends, in a time when many men changed both with as little compunction as they changed wigs and swords. His personality was singularly winning; his features regular, and full of refinement and intelligence; his bearing dignified and graceful; his temper kindly and in perfect control; his character without a stain; his conversation enchanting, its charm confessed by persons so diverse in taste as Pope, Swift, Steele, and Young. Lady Mary Montagu declared that he was the best company she had ever known. He had two faults of which the world has heard much: he loved the company of men who flattered him, and at times he used wine too freely. The first of these defects was venial, and did not blind his judgment either of himself or his friends; the second defect was so common among the men of his time that Addison's occasional over-indulgence, in contrast with the excesses of others, seems like temperance itself.

The harmony and symmetry of this winning personality has, in a sense, told against it; for men are prone to call the well-balanced nature cold and the well-regulated life Pharisaic. Addison did not escape charges of this kind from the wild livers of his own time, who could not dissociate genius from profligacy nor generosity of nature from prodigality. It was one of the great services of Addison to his generation and to all generations, that in an age of violent passions, he showed how a strong man could govern himself. In a time of reckless living, he illustrated the power which flows from subordination of pleasure to duty. In a day when wit was identified with malice, he brought out its power to entertain, surprise, and delight, without taking on the irreverent levity of Voltaire, the bitterness of Swift, or the malice of Pope.

It was during Addison's stay in Ireland that Richard Steele projected the Tatler, and brought out the first number in 1709. His friendship for Addison amounted almost to a passion; their intimacy was cemented by harmony of tastes and diversity of character. Steele was ardent, impulsive, warm-hearted, mercurial; full of aspiration and beset by lamentable weaknesses,— preaching the highest morality and constantly falling into the prevalent vices of his time; a man so lovable of temper, so generous a spirit, and so frank a nature, that his faults seem to humanize his character rather than to weaken and stain it. Steele's gifts were many, and they were always at the service of his feelings; he had an Irish warmth of sympathy and an Irish readiness of humor, with great facility of inventiveness, and an inexhaustible interest in all aspects of human experience. There had been political journals in England since the time of the Revolution, but Steele conceived the idea of a journal which should comment on the events and characteristics of the time in a bright and humorous way; using freedom with judgment and taste, and attacking the vices and follies of the time with the light equipment of wit rather than with the heavy armament of the formal moralist. The time was ripe for such an enterprise. London was full of men and women of brilliant parts, whose manners, tastes, and talk presented rich material for humorous report and delineation or for satiric comment. Society, in the modern sense, was fast taking form, and the resources of social intercourse were being rapidly developed. Men in public life were intimately allied with society and sensitive to its opinion; and men of all interests—public, fashionable, literary—gathered in groups at the different chocolate or coffee houses, and formed a kind of organized community. It was distinctly an aristocratic society: elegant in dress, punctilious in manner, exacting in taste, ready to be amused, and not indifferent to criticism when it took the form of sprightly badinage or of keen and trenchant satire. The informal organization of society, which made it possible to reach and affect the Town as a whole, is suggested by the division of the Tatler:—

"All accounts of Gallantry, Pleasure, and Entertainment, shall be under the article of White's Chocolate-House: Poetry under that of Will's Coffee-House; Learning under the title of Grecian; Foreign and Domestic News you will have from St. James's Coffee-House: and what else I have to offer on any other subject shall be dated from my own apartment."

So wrote Steele in his introduction to the readers of the new journal, which was to appear three times a week, at the cost of a penny. Of the coffee-houses enumerated, St. James's and White's were the headquarters of men of fashion and of politics; the Grecian of men of legal learning; Will's of men of Letters. The Tatler was successful from the start. It was novel in form and in spirit; it was sprightly without being frivolous, witty without being indecent, keen without being libelous or malicious. In the general license and coarseness of the time, so close to the Restoration and the powerful reaction against Puritanism, the cleanness, courtesy, and good taste which characterized the journal had all the charm of a new diversion. In paper No. 18, Addison made his appearance as a contributor, and gave the world the first of those inimitable essays which influenced their own time so widely, and which have become the solace and delight of all times. To Addison's influence may perhaps be traced the change which came over the Tatler, and which is seen in the gradual disappearance of the news element, and the steady drift of the paper away from journalism and toward literature. Society soon felt the full force of the extraordinary talent at the command of the new censor of contemporary manners and morals. There was a well-directed and incessant fire of wit against the prevailing taste of dramatic art; against the vices of gambling and dueling; against extravagance and affectation of dress and manner: and there was also criticism of a new order.

The Tatler was discontinued in January, 1711, and the first number of the Spectator appeared in March. The new journal was issued daily, but it made no pretensions to newspaper timeliness or interest; it aimed to set a new standard in manners, morals, and taste, without assuming the airs of a teacher. «It was said of Socrates,» wrote Addison, in a memorable chapter in the new journal, «that he brought Philosophy down from heaven to inhabit among men; and I shall be happy to have it said of me that I have brought Philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses.» For more than two years the Spectator discharged with inimitable skill and success the difficult function of chiding, reproving, and correcting, without irritating, wounding, or causing strife. Swift found the paper too gentle, but its influence was due in no small measure to its persuasiveness. Addison studied his method of attack as carefully as Matthew Arnold, who undertook a similar educational work in our own time, studied his means of approach to a public indifferent or hostile to his ideas. The two hundred and seventy-four papers furnished by Addison to the columns of the Spectator may be said to mark the full development of English prose as a free, flexible, clear, and elegant medium of expressing the most varied and delicate shades of thought. They mark also the perfection of the essay form in our literature; revealing clear perception of its limitations and of its resources; easy mastery of its possibilities of serious exposition and of pervading charm; ability to employ its full capacity of conveying serious thought in a manner at once easy and authoritative. They mark also the beginning of a deeper and more intelligent criticism; for their exposition of Milton may be said to point the way to a new quality of literary judgment and a new order of literary comment. These papers mark, finally, the beginnings of the English novel; for they contain a series of character-studies full of insight, delicacy of drawing, true feeling, and sureness of touch. Addison was not content to satirize the follies, attack the vices, and picture the manners of his times: he created a group of figures which stand out as distinctly as those which were drawn more than a century later by the hand of Thackeray, our greatest painter of manners. De Foe had not yet published the first of the great modern novels of incident and adventure in ‹Robinson Crusoe,› and Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett were unborn or unknown, when Addison was sketching Sir Roger de Coverley and Will Honeycomb, and filling in the background with charming studies of life in London and in the country. The world has instinctively selected Sir Roger de Coverley as the truest of all the creations of Addison's imagination; and it sheds clear light on the fineness of Addison's nature that among the four characters in fiction whom English readers have agreed to accept as typical gentlemen,—Don Quixote, Sir Roger de Coverley, Henry Esmond, and Colonel Newcombe,—the old English baronet holds a secure place.

Finished in style, but genuinely human in feeling, betraying the nicest choice of words and the most studied care for elegant and effective arrangement, and yet penetrated by geniality, enlivened by humor, elevated by high moral aims, often using the dangerous weapons of irony and satire, and yet always well-mannered and kindly,—these papers reveal the sensitive nature of Addison and the delicate but thoroughly tempered art which he had at his command.

Rarely has literature of so high an order had such instant success; for the popularity of the Spectator has been rivaled in English literature only by that of the Waverley novels or of the novels of Dickens. Its influence was felt not only in the sentiment of the day, and in the crowd of imitators which followed in its wake, but also across the Channel. In Germany, especially, the genius and methods of Addison made a deep and lasting impression.

No man could reach such eminence in the first quarter of the last century without being tempted to try his hand at play-writing; and the friendly fortune which seemed to serve Addison at every turn reached its climax in the applause which greeted the production of ‹Cato.› The motive of this tragedy, constructed on what were then held to be classic lines, is found in the two lines of the Prologue: it was an endeavor to portray

«A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
And greatly falling with a falling State.»

The play was full of striking lines which were instantly caught up and applied to the existing political situation; the theatre was crowded night after night, and the resources of Europe in the way of translations, plaudits, and favorable criticisms were exhausted in the endeavor to express the general approval. The judgment of a later period has, however, assigned ‹Cato› a secondary place, and it is remembered mainly on account of its many felicitous passages. It lacks real dramatic unity and vitality; the character of Cato is essentially an abstraction; there is little dramatic necessity in the situations and incidents. It is rhetorical rather than poetic, declamatory rather than dramatic. Johnson aptly described it as «rather a poem in dialogue than a drama, rather a succession of just sentiments in elegant language than a representation of natural affections, or of any state probable or possible in human life.»

Addison's popularity touched its highest point in the production of ‹Cato.› Even his conciliatory nature could not disarm the envy which such brilliant success naturally aroused, nor wholly escape the bitterness which the intense political feeling of the time constantly bred between ambitious and able men. Political differences separated him from Swift, and Steele's uncertain character and inconsistent course blighted what was probably the most delightful intimacy of his life. Pope doubtless believed that he had good ground for charging Addison with jealousy and insincerity, and in 1715 an open rupture took place between them. The story of the famous quarrel was first told by Pope, and his version was long accepted in many quarters as final; but later opinion inclines to hold Addison guiltless of the grave accusations brought against him. Pope was morbidly sensitive to slights, morbidly eager for praise, and extremely irritable. To a man of such temper, trifles light as air became significant of malice and hatred. Such trifles unhappily confirmed Pope's suspicions; his self-love was wounded, sensitiveness became animosity, and animosity became hate, which in the end inspired the most stinging bit of satire in the language:—

«Should such a one, resolved to reign alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,
View him with jealous yet with scornful eyes,
Hate him for arts that caused himself to rise,
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;
Alike unused to blame or to commend,
A timorous foe and a suspicious friend,
Fearing e'en fools, by flatterers besieged,
And so obliging that he ne'er obliged;
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike.»

There was just enough semblance of truth in these inimitable lines to give them lasting stinging power; but that they were grossly unjust is now generally conceded. Addison was human, and therefore not free from the frailties of men of his profession; but there was no meanness in him.

Addison's loyalty to the Whig party and his ability to serve it kept him in intimate relations with its leaders and bound him to its fortunes. He served the Whig cause in Parliament, and filled many positions which required tact and judgment, attaining at last the very dignified post of Secretary of State. A long attachment for the Countess of Warwick culminated in marriage in 1716, and Addison took up his residence in Holland House; a house famous for its association with men of distinction in politics and letters. The marriage was not happy, if report is to be trusted. The union of the ill-adapted pair was, in any event, short-lived; for three years later, in 1718, Addison died in his early prime, not yet having completed his forty-eighth year. On his death-bed, Young tells us, he called his stepson to his side and said, «See in what peace a Christian can die.» His body was laid in Westminster Abbey; his work is one of the permanent possessions of the English-speaking race; his character is one of its finest traditions. He was, as truly as Sir Philip Sidney, a gentleman in the sweetness of his spirit, the courage of his convictions, the refinement of his bearing, and the purity of his life. He was unspoiled by fortune and applause; uncorrupted by the tempting chances of his time; stainless in the use of gifts which in the hands of a man less true would have caught the contagion of Pope's malice or of Swift's corroding cynicism

Hamilton W. Mabie

SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY AT THE PLAY

From the Spectator, No. 335

My friend Sir Roger de Coverley, when we last met together at the Club, told me, that he had a great mind to see the new Tragedy with me, assuring me at the same time that he had not been at a Play these twenty Years. The last I saw, said Sir Roger, was the *Committee*, which I should not have gone to neither, had not I been told beforehand that it was a good Church-of-*England* Comedy. He then proceeded to enquire of me who this Distrest Mother was; and upon hearing that she was *Hector's* Widow, he told me that her Husband was a brave

Man, and that when he was a Schoolboy he had read his Life at the end of the Dictionary. My friend asked me in the next place, if there would not be some danger in coming home late, in case the *Mohocks** should be Abroad. I assure you, says he, I thought I had fallen into their Hands last Night; for I observed two or three lusty black Men that follow'd me half way up *Fleet-street*, and mended their pace behind me, in proportion as I put on to get away from them. You must know, continu'd the Knight with a Smile, I fancied they had a mind to *hunt* me; for I remember an honest Gentleman in my Neighbourhood, who was served such a trick in King *Charles* the Second's time; for which reason he has not ventured himself in Town ever since. I might have shown them very good Sport, had this been their Design; for as I am an old Fox-hunter, I should have turned and dodg'd, and have play'd them a thousand tricks they had never seen in their Lives before. Sir Roger added, that if these gentlemen had any such Intention, they did not succeed very well in it: for I threw them out, says he, at the End of *Norfolk street*, where I doubled the Corner, and got shelter in my Lodgings before they could imagine what was become of me. However, says the Knight, if Captain Sentry will make one with us to-morrow night, and if you will both of you call upon me about four a Clock, that we may be at the House before it is full, I will have my own Coach in readiness to attend you, for *John* tells me he has got the Fore-Wheels mended.

The Captain, who did not fail to meet me there at the appointed Hour, bid Sir Roger fear nothing, for that he had put on the same Sword which he made use of at the Battel of *Steenkirk*. Sir Roger's Servants, and among the rest my old Friend the Butler, had, I found, provided themselves with good Oaken Plants, to attend their Master upon this occasion. When he had placed him in his Coach, with my self at his Left-Hand, the Captain before him, and his Butler at the Head of his Footmen in the Rear, we convoy'd him in safety to the Play-house, where, after having marched up the Entry in good order, the Captain and I went in with him, and seated him betwixt us in the Pit. As soon as the House was full, and the Candles lighted, my old Friend stood up and looked about him with that Pleasure, which a Mind seasoned with Humanity naturally feels in its self, at the sight of a Multitude of People who seem pleased with one another, and partake of the same common Entertainment. I could not but fancy to myself, as the old Man stood up in the middle of the Pit, that he made a very proper Center to a Tragick Audience. Upon the entring of *Pyrrhus*, the Knight told me that he did not believe the King of *France* himself had a better Strut. I was indeed very attentive to my old Friend's Remarks, because I looked upon them as a Piece of natural Criticism, and was well pleased to hear him at the Conclusion of almost every Scene, telling me that he could not imagine how the Play would end. One while he appeared much concerned for *Andromache;* and a little while after as much for *Hermione:* and was extremely puzzled to think what would become of *Pyrrhus*.

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* London «bucks» who disguised themselves as savages and roamed the streets at night, committing outrages on persons and property.

When Sir Roger saw *Andromache's* obstinate Refusal to her Lover's importunities, he whisper'd me in the Ear, that he was sure she would never have him; to which he added, with a more than ordinary Vehemence, You can't imagine, Sir, what 'tis to have to do with a Widow. Upon *Pyrrhus* his threatning afterwards to leave her, the Knight shook his Head, and muttered to himself, Ay, do if you can. This Part dwelt so much upon my Friend's Imagination, that at the close of the Third Act, as I was thinking of something else, he whispered in my Ear, These Widows, Sir, are the most perverse Creatures in the World. But pray, says he, you that are a Critick, is this Play according to your Dramatick Rules, as you call them? Should your People in Tragedy always talk to be understood? Why, there is not a single Sentence in this Play that I do not know the Meaning of.

The Fourth Act very luckily begun before I had time to give the old Gentleman an Answer: Well, says the Knight, sitting down with great Satisfaction, I suppose we are now to see *Hector's* Ghost. He then renewed his Attention, and, from time to time, fell a praising the Widow. He made, indeed, a little Mistake as to one of her Pages, whom at his first entering, he took for *Astyanax;* but he quickly set himself right in that Particular, though, at the same time, he owned he should have been very glad to have seen the little Boy, who, says he, must needs be a very fine Child by the Account that is given of him. Upon *Hermione's* going off with a Menace to *Pyrrhus*, the Audience gave a loud Clap; to which Sir Roger added, On my Word, a notable young Baggage!

As there was a very remarkable Silence and Stillness in the Audience during the whole Action, it was natural for them to take the Opportunity of these Intervals between the Acts, to express their Opinion of the Players, and of their respective Parts. Sir Roger hearing a Cluster of them praise *Orestes*, struck in with them, and told them, that he thought his Friend *Pylades* was a very sensible Man; as they were afterwards applauding *Pyrrhus*, Sir Roger put in a second time; And let me tell you, says he, though he speaks but little, I like the old Fellow in Whiskers as well as any of them. Captain Sentry seeing two or three Waggs who sat near us, lean with an attentive Ear towards Sir Roger, and fearing lest they should Smoke the Knight, pluck'd him by the Elbow, and whisper'd something in his Ear, that lasted till the Opening of the Fifth Act. The Knight was wonderfully attentive to the Account which *Orestes* gives of *Pyrrhus* his Death, and at the Conclusion of it, told me it was such a bloody Piece of Work, that he was glad it was not done upon the Stage. Seeing afterwards *Orestes* in his raving Fit, he grew more than ordinary serious, and took occasion to moralize (in his way) upon an Evil Conscience, adding, that *Orestes, in his Madness, looked as if he saw something.*

As we were the first that came into the House, so we were the last that went out of it; being resolved to have a clear Passage for our old Friend, whom we did not care to venture among the justling of the Crowd. Sir Roger went out fully satisfied with his Entertainment, and we guarded him to his Lodgings in the same manner that we brought him to the Playhouse; being highly pleased, for my own part, not only with the Performance of the excellent Piece which had been Presented, but with the Satisfaction which it had given to the good old Man. L.

A VISIT TO SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY

From the Spectator, No. 106

Having often received an Invitation from my Friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a Month with him in the Country, I last Week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his Country-house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing Speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my Humour, lets me rise and go to Bed when I please, dine at his own Table or in my Chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the Gentlemen of the Country come to see him, he only shews me at a distance: As I have been walking in his Fields I have observed them stealing a Sight of me over an Hedge, and have heard the Knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at Ease in Sir Roger's Family, because it consists of sober and staid Persons: for as the Knight is the best Master in the World, he seldom changes his Servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his Servants never care for leaving him: by this means his Domesticks are all in years, and grown old with their Master. You would take his Valet de Chambre for his Brother, his Butler is grey-headed, his Groom is one of the Gravest men that I have ever seen, and his Coachman has the Looks of a Privy-Counsellor. You see the Goodness of the Master even in the old House-dog, and in a grey Pad that is kept in the Stable with great Care and Tenderness out of Regard to his past Services, tho' he has been useless for several Years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the Joy that appeared in the Countenances of these ancient Domesticks upon my Friend's Arrival at his Country-Seat. Some of them could not refrain from Tears at the Sight of their old Master; every one of them press'd forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old Knight, with a Mixture of the Father and the Master of the Family, tempered the Enquiries after his own Affairs with several kind Questions relating to themselves. This Humanity and good Nature engages every Body to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his Family are in good Humour, and none so much as the Person whom he diverts himself with: On the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any Infirmity of old Age, it is easy for a Stander-by to observe a secret Concern in the Looks of all his Servants.

My worthy Friend has put me under the particular Care of his Butler, who is a very prudent Man, and, as well as the rest of his Fellow-Servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their Master talk of me as of his particular Friend.

My chief Companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the Woods or the Fields, is a very venerable man who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his House in the Nature of a

Chaplain above thirty Years. This Gentleman is a Person of good Sense and some Learning, of a very regular Life and obliging Conversation: He heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old Knight's Esteem, so that he lives in the Family rather as a Relation than a Dependent.

I have observed in several of my Papers, that my Friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good Qualities, is something of an Humourist; and that his Virtues, as well as Imperfections, are as it were tinged by a certain Extravagance, which makes them particularly *his*, and distinguishes them from those of other Men. This Cast of Mind, as it is generally very innocent in it self, so it renders his Conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same Degree of Sense and Virtue would appear in their common and ordinary Colours. As I was walking with him last Night, he asked me how I liked the good Man whom I have just now mentioned? and without staying for my Answer told me, That he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own Table; for which Reason he desired a particular Friend of his at the University to find him out a Clergyman rather of plain Sense than much Learning, of a good Aspect, a clear Voice, a sociable Temper, and, if possible, a Man that understood a little of Back-Gammon. My Friend, says Sir Roger, found me out this Gentleman, who, besides the Endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good Scholar, tho' he does not shew it. I have given him the Parsonage of the Parish; and because I know his Value have settled upon him a good Annuity for Life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my Esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty Years; and tho' he does not know I have taken Notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, tho' he is every Day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my Tenants his Parishioners. There has not been a Law-suit in the Parish since he has liv'd among them: If any Dispute arises they apply themselves to him for the Decision; if they do not acquiesce in his Judgment, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a Present of all the good Sermons which have been printed in *English*, and only begg'd of him that every *Sunday* he would pronounce one of them in the Pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a Series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued System of practical Divinity.

As Sir Roger was going on in his Story, the Gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the Knight's asking him who preached to morrow (for it was *Saturday* Night) told us, the Bishop of St. *Asaph* in the Morning, and Dr. *South* in the Afternoon. He then shewed us his List of Preachers for the whole Year, where I saw with a great deal of Pleasure Archbishop *Tillotson*, Bishop *Saunderson*, Doctor *Barrow*, Doctor *Calamy*, with several living Authors who have published Discourses of Practical Divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable Man in the Pulpit, but I very much approved of my Friend's insisting upon the Qualifications of a good Aspect and a clear Voice; for I was so charmed with the Gracefulness of his Figure and Delivery, as well as with the Discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any Time more to my Satisfaction. A Sermon repeated after this Manner, is like the Composition of a Poet in the Mouth of a graceful Actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our Country Clergy would follow this Example; and in stead of wasting their Spirits in laborious Compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome Elocution, and all those other Talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater Masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the People.

THE VANITY OF HUMAN LIFE

‘The Vision of Mirzah,’ from the Spectator, No. 159

WHEN I was at *Grand Cairo*, I picked up several Oriental Manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entitled, *The Visions of Mirzah*, which I have read over with great Pleasure. I intend to give it to the Publick when I have no other entertainment for them; and shall begin with the first Vision, which I have translated Word for Word as follows.

“On the fifth Day of the Moon, which according to the Custom of my Forefathers I always keep holy, after having washed my self, and offered up my Morning Devotions, I ascended the high hills of *Bagdat*, in order to pass the rest of the Day in Meditation and Prayer. As I was here airing my self on the Tops of the Mountains, I fell into a profound Contemplation on the Vanity of human Life; and passing from one Thought to another, Surely, said I, Man is but a Shadow and Life a Dream. Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the Summit of a Rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the Habit of a Shepherd, with a little Musical Instrument in his Hand. As I looked upon him he applied it to his Lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a Variety of Tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from any thing I had ever heard: They put me in mind of those heavenly Airs that are played to the departed Souls of good Men upon their first Arrival in Paradise, to wear out the Impressions of the last Agonies, and qualify them for the Pleasures of that happy Place. My Heart melted away in secret Raptures.

I had been often told that the Rock before me was the Haunt of a Genius; and that several had been entertained with Musick who had passed by it, but never heard that the Musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my Thoughts by those transporting Airs which he played, to taste the Pleasures of his Conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his Hand directed me to approach the Place where he sat. I drew near with that Reverence which is due to a superior Nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating Strains I heard, I fell down at his Feet and wept. The Genius smiled upon me with a Look of Compassion and Affability that familiarized him to my Imagination, and at once dispelled all the Fears and Apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the Ground, and taking me by the hand, *Mirzah*, said he, I have heard thee in thy Soliloquies; follow me.

He then led me to the highest Pinnacle of the Rock, and placing me on the Top of it, Cast thy Eyes Eastward, said he, and tell me what thou seest. I see, said I, a huge Valley, and a prodigious Tide of Water rolling through it. The Valley that thou seest, said he, is the Vale of Misery, and the Tide of Water that thou seest is part of the great Tide of Eternity. What is the Reason, said I, that the Tide I see rises out of a thick Mist at one End, and again loses itself in a thick Mist at the other? What thou seest, said he, is that Portion of Eternity which is called Time, measured out by the Sun, and reaching from the Beginning of the World to its Consummation. Examine now, said he, this Sea that is bounded with darkness at both

Ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it. I see a Bridge, said I, standing in the Midst of the Tide. The Bridge thou seest, said he, is human Life, consider it attentively. Upon a more leisurely Survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire Arches, with several broken Arches, which added to those that were entire, made up the Number about an hundred. As I was counting the Arches, the Genius told me that this Bridge consisted at first of a thousand Arches; but that a great Flood swept away the rest, and left the Bridge in the ruinous Condition I now beheld it: But tell me further, said he, what thou discoverest on it. I see Multitudes of People passing over it, said I, and a black Cloud hanging on each End of it. As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the Passengers dropping thro' the Bridge, into the great Tide that flowed underneath it; and upon farther Examination, perceived there were innumerable Trap-doors that lay concealed in the Bridge, which the Passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell thro' them into the Tide and immediately disappeared. These hidden Pit-falls were set very thick at the Entrance of the Bridge, so that the Throngs of People no sooner broke through the Cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the Middle, but multiplied and lay closer together toward the End of the Arches that were entire. There were indeed some Persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of a hobbling March on the broken Arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a Walk.

I passed some Time in the Contemplation of this wonderful Structure, and the great Variety of Objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep Melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of Mirth and Jollity, and catching at every thing that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the Heavens in a thoughtful Posture, and in the midst of a Speculation stumbled and fell out of Sight. Multitudes were very busy in the Pursuit of Bubbles that glittered in their Eyes and danced before them; but often when they thought themselves within the reach of them their Footing failed and down they sunk. In this Confusion of Objects, I observed some with Scymetars in their Hands, and others with Urinals, who ran to and fro upon the Bridge, thrusting several Persons on Trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been forced upon them.

The Genius seeing me indulge my self in this melancholy Prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it: Take thine Eyes off the Bridge, said he, and tell me if thou yet seest any thing thou dost not comprehend. Upon looking up, What mean, said I, those great Flights of Birds that are perpetually hovering about the Bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see Vultures, Harpyes, Ravens, Cormorants, and among many other feather'd Creatures several little winged Boys, that perch in great Numbers upon the middle Arches. These, said the Genius, are Envy, Avarice, Superstition, Despair, Love, with the like Cares and Passions that infest human Life.

I here fetched a deep Sigh, Alas, said I, Man was made in vain! How is he given away to Misery and Mortality! tortured in Life, and swallowed up in Death! The Genius being moved with Compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a Prospect: Look no more, said he, on Man in the first Stage of his Existence, in his setting out for Eternity; but cast thine Eye on that thick Mist into which the Tide bears the several Generations of Mortals that fall into it. I directed my Sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good Genius strengthened it with any supernatural Force, or dissipated Part of the Mist that was before too thick for the Eye to penetrate) I saw the Valley opening at the farther End, and spreading forth into an immense Ocean, that had a huge Rock of Adamant running through the Midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The Clouds still rested on one Half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it: But the other appeared to me a vast Ocean planted with innumerable Islands, that were covered with Fruits and Flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining Seas that ran among them. I could see Persons dressed in glorious Habits with Garlands upon their Heads, passing among the Trees, lying down by the Side of Fountains, or resting on Beds of Flowers; and could hear a confused Harmony of singing Birds, falling Waters, human Voices, and musical Instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the Discovery of so delightful a Scene. I wished for the Wings of an Eagle, that I might fly away to those happy Seats; but the Genius told me there was no Passage to them, except through the Gates of Death that I saw opening every Moment upon the Bridge. The Islands, said he, that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole Face of the Ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the Sands on the Sea-shore; there are Myriads of Islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine Eye, or even thine Imagination can extend it self. These are the Mansions of good Men after Death, who according to the Degree and Kinds of Virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several Islands, which abound with Pleasures of different Kinds and Degrees, suitable to the Relishes and Perfections of those who are settled in them; every Island is a Paradise accommodated to its respective Inhabitants. Are not these, O *Mirzah*, Habitations worth contending for? Does Life appear miserable, that gives thee Opportunities of earning such a Reward? Is Death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an Existence? Think not Man was made in vain, who has such an Eternity reserved for him. I gazed with inexpressible Pleasure on these happy Islands. At length, said I, shew me now, I beseech thee, the Secrets that lie hid under those dark Clouds which cover the Ocean on the other side of the Rock of Adamant. The Genius making me no Answer, I turned about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me; I then turned again to the Vision which I had been so long contemplating; but Instead of the rolling Tide, the arched Bridge, and the happy Islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow Valley of *Bagdat*, with Oxen, Sheep, and Camels grazing upon the Sides of it.

AN ESSAY ON FANS

From the Spectator, No. 102

I do not know whether to call the following Letter a Satyr upon Coquets, or a Representation of their several fantastical Accomplishments, or what other Title to give it; but as it is I shall communicate it to the Publick. It will sufficiently explain its own Intentions, so that I shall give it my Reader at Length, without either Preface or Postscript.

Mr. Spectator:

Women are armed with Fans as Men with Swords, and sometimes do more Execution with them. To the end therefore that Ladies may be entire Mistresses of the Weapon which they bear, I have erected an Academy for the training up of young Women in the *Exercise of the Fan*, according to the most fashionable Airs and Motions that are now practis'd at Court. The Ladies who *carry* Fans under me are drawn up twice a-day in my great Hall, where they are instructed in the Use of their Arms, and *exercised* by the following Words of Command,

Handle your Fans,
Unfurl your Fans,
Discharge your Fans,
Ground your Fans,
Recover your Fans,
Flutter your Fans.

By the right Observation of these few plain Words of Command, a Woman of a tolerable Genius, who will apply herself diligently to her Exercise for the Space of but one half Year, shall be able to give her Fan all the Graces that can possibly enter into that little modish Machine.

But to the end that my Readers may form to themselves a right Notion of this *Exercise*, I beg leave to explain it to them in all its Parts. When my Female Regiment is drawn up in Array, with every one her Weapon in her Hand, upon my giving the Word to *handle their Fans*, each of them shakes her Fan at me with a Smile, then gives her Right-hand Woman a Tap upon the Shoulder, then presses her Lips with the Extremity of her Fan, then lets her Arms fall in an easy Motion, and stands in a Readiness to receive the next Word of Command. All this is done with a close Fan, and is generally learned in the first Week.

The next Motion is that of *unfurling the Fan*, in which are comprehended several little Flirts and Vibrations, as also gradual and deliberate Openings, with many voluntary Fallings asunder in the Fan itself, that are seldom learned under a Month's Practice. This part of the *Exercise* pleases the Spectators more than any other, as it discovers on a sudden an infinite Number of *Cupids*, [Garlands,] Altars, Birds, Beasts, Rainbows, and the like agreable Figures, that display themselves to View, whilst every one in the Regiment holds a Picture in her Hand.

Upon my giving the Word to *discharge their Fans*, they give one general Crack that may be heard at a considerable distance when the Wind sits fair. This is one of the most difficult parts of the *Exercise;* but I have several ladies with me who at their first Entrance could not give a Pop loud enough to be heard at the further end of a Room, who can now *discharge a Fan* in such a manner that it shall make a Report like a Pocket-Pistol. I have likewise taken care (in order to hinder young Women from letting off their Fans in wrong Places or unsuitable Occasions) to shew upon what Subject the Crack of a Fan may come in properly: I have likewise invented a Fan, with which a Girl of Sixteen, by the help of a little Wind which is inclosed about one of the largest Sticks, can make as loud a Crack as a Woman of Fifty with an ordinary Fan.

When the Fans are thus *discharged*, the Word of Command in course is to *ground their Fans*. This teaches a Lady to quit her Fan gracefully, when she throws it aside in order to take up a Pack of Cards, adjust a Curl of Hair, replace a falling Pin, or apply her self to any other Matter of Importance. This Part of the *Exercise*, as it only consists in tossing a Fan with an Air upon a long Table (which stands by for that Purpose) may be learned in two Days Time as well as in a Twelvemonth.

When my Female Regiment is thus disarmed, I generally let them walk about the Room for some Time; when on a sudden (like Ladies that look upon their Watches after a long Visit) they all of them hasten to their Arms, catch them up in a Hurry, and place themselves in their proper Stations upon my calling out *Recover your Fans*. This Part of the *Exercise* is not difficult, provided a Woman applies her Thoughts to it.

The *Fluttering of the Fan* is the last, and indeed the Masterpiece of the whole *Exercise;* but if a Lady does not mis-spend her Time, she may make herself Mistress of it in three Months. I generally lay aside the Dog-days and the hot Time of the Summer for the teaching this Part of the *Exercise;* for as soon as ever I pronounce *Flutter your Fans*, the Place is fill'd with so many Zephyrs and gentle Breezes as are very refreshing in that Season of the Year, tho' they might be dangerous to Ladies of a tender Constitution in any other.

There is an infinite variety of Motions to be made use of in the *Flutter of a Fan*. There is an Angry Flutter, the modest Flutter, the timorous Flutter, the confused Flutter, the merry Flutter, and the amorous Flutter. Not to be tedious, there is scarce any Emotion in the Mind which does not produce a suitable Agitation in the Fan; insomuch, that if I only see the Fan of a disciplin'd Lady, I know very well whether she laughs, frowns, or blushes. I have seen a Fan so very Angry, that it would have been dangerous for the absent Lover who provoked it to have come within the Wind of it; and at other times so very languishing, that I have been glad for the Lady's sake the Lover was at a sufficient Distance from it. I need not add, that a Fan is either a Prude or Coquet according to the Nature of the Person who bears it. To conclude my Letter, I must acquaint you that I have from my own Observations compiled a little Treatise for the use of my Scholars, entitled *The Passions of the Fan;* which I will communicate to you, if you think it may be of use to the Publick. I shall have a general Review on *Thursday* next; to which you shall be very welcome if you will honour it with your Presence. *I am*, &c.

P. S. I teach young Gentlemen the whole Art of Gallanting a Fan.

N. B. I have several little plain Fans made for this Use, to avoid Expence. L.

HYMN

From the Spectator, No. 465

The Spacious Firmament on high
With all the blue Etherial Sky,
And Spangled Heav'ns, a Shining Frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
Th' unwearied Sun, from Day to Day,
Does his Creator's Pow'r display,
And publishes to every Land
The Work of an Almighty Hand.

Soon as the Evening Shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous Tale,
And nightly to the list'ning Earth,
Repeats the Story of her Birth:
While all the Stars that round her burn,
And all the Planets in their Turn,
Confirm the Tidings as they rowl,
And spread the Truth from Pole to Pole.

What though, in solemn Silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial Ball?
What tho' nor real Voice nor Sound
Amid their radiant Orbs be found?
In Reason's Ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious Voice,
For ever singing, as they shine,
"The Hand that made us is Divine."

ÆLIANUS CLAUDIUS

(Second Century A. D.)

According to his 'Varia Historia,' Ælianus Claudius was a native of Præneste and a citizen of Rome, at the time of the emperor Hadrian. He taught Greek rhetoric at Rome, and hence was known as «the Sophist.» He spoke and wrote Greek with the fluency and ease of a native Athenian, and gained thereby the epithet of «the honey-tongued.» He lived to be sixty years of age, and never married because he would not incur the responsibility of children.

The 'Varia Historia' is the most noteworthy of his works. It is a curious and interesting collection of short narratives, anecdotes, and other historical, biographical, and antiquarian matter, selected from the Greek authors whom he said he loved to study. And it is valuable because it preserves scraps of works now lost. The extracts are either in the words of the original, or give the compiler's version; for, as he says, he liked to have his own way and to follow his own taste. They are grouped without method; but in this very lack of order — which shows that «browsing» instinct which Charles Lamb declared to be essential to a right feeling for literature — the charm of the book lies. This habit of straying, and his lack of style, prove Ælianus more of a vagabond in the domain of letters than a rhetorician.

His other important book, 'De Animalium Natura' (On the Nature of Animals), is a medley of his own observations, both in Italy and during his travels as far as Egypt. For several hundred years it was a popular and standard book on zoölogy; and even as late as the fourteenth century, Manuel Philes, a Byzantine poet, founded upon it a poem on animals. Like the 'Varia Historia,' it is scrappy and gossiping. He leaps from subject to subject: from elephants to dragons, from the liver of mice to the uses of oxen. There was, however, method in this disorder; for as he says, he sought thereby to give variety and hold his reader's attention. The book is interesting, moreover, as giving us a personal glimpse of the man and of his methods of work; for in a concluding chapter he states the general principle on which he composed: that he has spent great labor, thought, and care in writing it; that he has preferred the pursuit of knowledge to the pursuit of wealth; that for his part, he found more pleasure in observing the habits of the lion, the panther, and the fox, in listening to the song of the nightingale, and in studying the migrations of cranes, than in mere heaping up of riches and finding himself numbered among the great; and that throughout his work he has sought to adhere to the truth.

Ælianus was more of a moralizer than an artist in words; his style has no distinctive literary qualities, and in both of his chief works is the evident intention to set forth religious and moral principles. He wrote, moreover, some treatises expressly on religious and philosophic subjects, and some letters on husbandry.

The ‹Varia Historia› has been twice translated into English: by Abraham Fleming in 1576, and by Thomas Stanley, son of the poet and philosopher Stanley, in 1665. Fleming was a poet and scholar of the English Renaissance, who translated from the ancients, and made a digest of Holinshed's ‹Historie of England.› His version of Ælianus loses nothing by its quaint wording, as will be seen from the subjoined stories. The full title of the book is ‹A Registre of Hystories containing martiall Exploits of worthy Warriours, politique Practices and civil Magistrates, wise Sentences of famous Philosophers, and other Matters manifolde and memorable written in Greek by Ælianus Claudius and delivered in English by Abraham Fleming› (1576).

[All the selections following are from ‹A Registre of Hystories›]

OF CERTAIN NOTABLE MEN THAT MADE THEMSELVES PLAYFELLOWES WITH CHILDREN

Hercules (as some say) assuaged the tediousness of his labors, which he sustayned in open and common games, with playing. This Hercules, I say, being an incomparable warriour, and the sonne of Jupiter and Latona, made himselfe a playfellowe with boys. Euripides the poet introduceth, and bringeth in, the selfe same god speaking in his owne person, and saying, « I play because choyce and chaunge of labors is delectable and sweete unto me,» whiche wordes he uttered holdinge a boy by the hande. Socrates also was espied of Alcibiades upon a time, playing with Lamprocles, who was in manner but a childe. Agesilaus riding upon a rude, or cock-horse as they terme it, played with his sonne beeing but a boy: and when a certayn man passing by sawe him so doe and laughed there withall, Agesilaus sayde thus, Now hold thy peace and say nothing; but when thou art a father I doubt not thou wilt doe as fathers should doe with their children. Architas Tarentinus being both in authoritie in the commonwealth, that is to say a magestrat, and also a philosopher, not of the obscurest sorte, but a precise lover of wisdom, at that time he was a housband, a housekeeper, and maintained many servauntes, he was greatly delighted with their younglinges, used to play oftentimes with his servauntes' children, and was wonte, when he was at dinner and supper, to rejoyce in the sight and presence of them: yet was Tarentinus (as all men knowe) a man of famous memorie and noble name.

OF A CERTAINE SICILIAN WHOSE EYSIGHT WAS WOONDERFULL SHARPE AND QUICK

There was in Sicilia a certaine man indued with such sharpnesse, quicknesse, and clearnesse of sight (if report may challenge credite) that hee coulde see from Lilybæus to Carthage with such perfection and constancy that his eies coulde not be deceived: and that he tooke true and just account of all ships and vessels which went under sayle from Carthage, overskipping not so much as one in the universall number.

Something straunge it is that is recorded of Argus, a man that had no lesse than an hundred eyes, unto whose custody Juno committed Io, the daughter of Inachus, being transformed into a young heifer: while Argus (his luck being such) was slaine sleeping, but the Goddess Juno so provided that all his eyes (whatsoever became of his carkasse) should be placed on the pecock's taile; wherupon (sithence it came to passe) the pecock is called Avis Junonia, or Lady Juno Birde. This historie is notable, but yet the former (in mine opinion) is more memorable.

THE LAWE OF THE LACEDÆMONIANS AGAINST COVETOUSNESS

A certain young man of Lacedæmonia having bought a plot of land for a small and easy price (and, as they say, dogge cheape) was arrested to appear before the magistrates, and after the trial of his matter he was charged with a penalty. The reason why hee was judged worthy this punishment was because he being but a young man gaped so gredely after gain and yawned after filthy covetousness. For yt was a most commendable thing among the Lacedæmonians not only to fighte against the enemie in battell manfully; but also to wrestle and struggle with covetousness (that misschievous monster) valliauntly.

THAT SLEEP IS THE BROTHER OF DEATH, AND OF GORGIAS DRAWING TO HIS END

Gorgias Leontinus looking towardes the end of his life and beeing wasted with the weaknes and wearysomenesse of drooping olde age, falling into sharp and sore sicknesse upon a time slumbered and slept upon his soft pillowe a little season. Unto whose chamber a familiar freend of his resorting to visit him in his sicknes demaunded how he felt himself affected in body. To whom Gorgias Leontinus made this pithy and plausible answeer, « Now Sleep beginneth to deliver me up into the jurisdiction of his brother-germane, Death.»

OF THE VOLUNTARY AND WILLING DEATH OF CALANUS

The ende of Calanus deserveth no lesse commendation than it procureth admiration; it is no less praiseworthy than it was worthy wonder. The manner, therefore, was thus. The within-named Calanus, being a sophister of India, when he had taken his long leave and last farewell of Alexander, King of Macedonia, and of his life in lyke manner, being willing, desirous, and earnest to set himselfe at lybertie from the cloggs, chaines, barres, boults, and fetters of the prison of the body, pyled up a bonnefire in the suburbs of Babylon of dry woodde and chosen sticks provided of purpose to give a sweete savour and an odoriferous smell in burning. The kindes of woodde which hee used to serve his turne in this case were these: Cedre, Rosemary, Cipres, Mirtle, and Laurell. These things duely ordered, he buckled himselfe to his accustomed exercise, namely, running and leaping into the middest of the wodstack he stoode bolte upright, having about his head a garlande made of the greene leaves of reedes, the sunne shining full in his face, as he stoode in the pile of stycks, whose glorious majesty, glittering with bright beams of amiable beuty, he adored and worshipped. Furthermore he gave a token and signe to the Macedonians to kindle the fire, which, when they had done accordingly, hee beeing compassed round about with flickering flames, stoode stoutly and valiauntly in one and the selfe same place, and dyd not shrincke one foote, until they gave up the ghost, whereat Alexander unvailyng, as at a rare strange sight and worldes wonder, saide (as the voice goes) these words:—"Calanus hath subdued, overcome, and vanquished stronger enemies than I. For Alexander made warre against Porus, Taxiles, and Darius. But Calanus did denounce and did battell to labor and fought fearcely and manfully with death."

OF DELICATE DINNERS, SUMPTUOUS SUPPERS, AND PRODIGALL BANQUETING

Timothy, the son of Conon, captain of the Athenians, leaving his sumptuous fare and royall banqueting, beeing desired and intertained of Plato to a feast philosophicall, seasoned with contentation and musick, at his returning home from that supper of Plato, he said unto his familiar freends:—"They whiche suppe with Plato, this night, are not sick or out of temper the next day following;" and presently upon the enunciation of that speech, Timothy took occasion to finde fault with great dinners, suppers, feasts, and banquets, furnished with excessive fare, immoderate consuming of meats, delicates, dainties, toothsome junkets, and such like, which abridge the next dayes joy, gladnes, delight, mirth, and pleasantnes. Yea, that sentence is consonant and agreeable to the former, and importeth the same sense notwithstanding in words it hath a little difference. That the within named Timothy meeting the next day after with Plato said to him:—"You philosophers, freend Plato, sup better the day following than the night present."

OF BESTOWING TIME, AND HOW WALKING UP AND DOWNE WAS NOT ALLOWABLE AMONG THE LACEDÆMONIANS

The Lacedæmonians were of this judgment, that measureable spending of time was greatly to be esteemed, and therefore did they conforme and apply themselves to any kinde of laboure moste earnestly and painfully, not withdrawing their hands from works of much bodyly mooving, not permitting any particular person, beeing a citizen, to spend the time in idlenes, to waste it in unthrifty gaming, to consume it in trifling, in vain toyes and lewd loytering, all whiche are at variance and enmity with vertue. Of this latter among many testimonyes, take this for one.

When it was reported to the magistrates of the Lacedæmonians called Ephori, in manner of complaint, that the inhabitants of Deceleia used afternoone walkings, they sent unto them messengers with their commandmente, saying:—«Go not up and doune like loyterers, nor walke not abrode at your pleasure, pampering the wantonnes of your natures rather than accustoming yourself to exercises of activity. For it becometh the Lacedæmonians to regarde their health and to maintaine their safety not with walking to and fro, but with bodily labours.»

HOW SOCRATES SUPPRESSED THE PRYDE AND HAUTINESSE OF ALCIBIADES

Socrates, seeing Alcibiades puft up with pryde and broyling in ambitious behavioure (because possessor of such great wealth and lorde of so large lands) brought him to a place where a table did hang containing a discription of the worlde universall. Then did Socrates will Alcibiades to seeke out the situation of Athens, which when he found Socrates proceeded further and willed him to point out that plot of ground where his lands and lordships lay. Alcibiades, having sought a long time and yet never the nearer, sayde to Socrates that his livings were not set forth in that table, nor any discription of his possession therein made evident. When Socrates, rebuked with this secret quip: «And art thou so arrogant (sayeth he) and so hautie in heart for that which is no parcell of the world?»

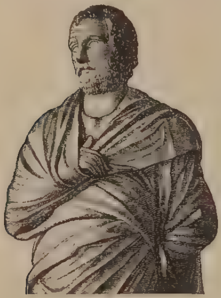
OF CERTAINE WASTGOODES AND SPENDTHRIFTES

Prodigall lavishing of substance, unthrifty and wastifull spending, voluptuousness of life and palpable sensuality brought Pericles, Callias, the sonne of Hipponicus, and Nicias not only to necessitie, but to povertie and beggerie. Who, after their money waxed scant, and turned to a very lowe ebbe, they three drinking a poysoned potion one to another (which was the last cuppe that they kissed with their lippes) passed out of this life (as it were from a banquet) to the powers infernall.

ÆSCHINES

(389–314 B. C.)

The life and oratory of Æschines fall fittingly into that period of Greek history when the free spirit of the people which had created the arts of Pindar and Sophocles, Pericles, Phidias, and Plato, was becoming the spirit of slaves and of savans, who sought to forget the freedom of their fathers in learning, luxury, and the formalism of deducers of rules. To this slavery Æschines himself contributed, both in action with Philip of Macedon and in speech. Philip had entered upon a career of conquest; a policy legitimate in itself and beneficial as judged by its larger fruits, but ruinous to the advanced civilization existing in the Greek City-States below, whose high culture was practically confiscated to spread out over a waste of semi-barbarism and mix with alien cultures. Among his Greek sympathizers, Æschines was perhaps his chief support in the conquest of the Greek world that lay to the south within his reach.


ÆSCHINES

Æschines was born in 389 B. C., six years before his lifelong rival Demosthenes. If we may trust that rival's elaborate details of his early life, his father taught a primary school and his mother was overseer of certain initiatory rites, to both of which occupations Æschines gave his youthful hand and assistance. He became in time a third-rate actor, and the duties of clerk or scribe presently made him familiar with the executive and legislative affairs of Athens. Both vocations served as an apprenticeship to the public speaking toward which his ambition was turning. We hear of his serving as a heavy-armed soldier in various Athenian expeditions, and of his being privileged to carry to Athens, in 349 B. C., the first news of the victory of Tamynæ, in Eubœa, in reward for the bravery he had shown in the battle.

Two years afterward he was sent as an envoy into the Peloponnesus, with the object of forming a union of the Greeks against Philip for the defense of their liberties. But his mission was unsuccessful. Toward the end of the same year he served as one of the ten ambassadors sent to Philip to discuss terms of peace. The harangues of the Athenians at this meeting were followed in turn by a speech of Philip, whose openness of manner, pertinent arguments, and pretended desire for a settlement led to a second embassy, empowered to receive from him the oath of allegiance and peace. It was during this second embassy that Demothenes says he discovered the philippizing spirit and foul play of Æschines. Upon their return to Athens, Æschines rose before the assembly to assure the people that Philip had come to Thermopylæ as the friend and ally of Athens. «We, your envoys, have satisfied him,» said Æschines. «You will hear of benefits still more direct which we have determined Philip to confer upon you, but which it would not be prudent as yet to specify.»

But the alarm of the Athenians at the presence of Philip within the gates was not allayed. The king, however, anxious to temporize with them until he could receive his army supplies by sea, suborned Æschines, who assured his countrymen of Philip's peaceful intentions. On another occasion, by an inflammatory speech at Delphi, he so played upon the susceptibilities of the rude Amphictyones that they rushed forth, uprooted their neighbors' harvest fields, and began a devastating war of Greek against Greek. Internal dissensions promised the shrewd Macedonian the conquest he sought. At length, in August, 338, came Philip's victory at Chæronea, and the complete prostration of Greek power. Æschines, who had hitherto disclaimed all connection with Philip, now boasted of his intimacy with the king. As Philip's friend, while yet an Athenian, he offered himself as ambassador to entreat leniency from the victor toward the unhappy citizens.

The memorable defense of Demosthenes against the attack of Æschines was delivered in 330 B. C. Seven years before this, Ctesiphon had proposed to the Senate that the patriotic devotion and labors of Demosthenes should be acknowledged by the gift of a golden crown — a recognition willingly accorded. But as this decision, to be legal, must be confirmed by the Assembly, Æschines gave notice that he would proceed against Ctesiphon for proposing an unconstitutional measure. He managed to postpone action on the notice for six years. At last he seized a moment when the victories of Philip's son and successor, Alexander, were swaying popular feeling, to deliver a bitter harangue against the whole life and policy of his political opponent. Demosthenes answered in that magnificent oration called by the Latin writers 'De Corona.' Æschines was not upheld by the people's vote. He retired to Asia, and, it is said, opened a school of rhetoric at Rhodes. There is a legend that after he had one day delivered in his school the masterpiece of his enemy, his students broke into applause: «What,» he exclaimed, «if you had heard the wild beast thunder it out himself!»

Æschines was what we call nowadays a self-made man. The great faults of his life, his philippizing policy and his confessed corruption, arose, doubtless, from the results of youthful poverty: a covetousness growing out of want, and a lack of principles of conduct which a broader education would have instilled. As an orator he was second only to Demosthenes; and while he may at times be compared to his rival in intellectual force and persuasiveness, his moral defects—which it must be remembered that he himself acknowledged—make a comparison of character impossible.

His chief works remaining to us are the speeches ‹Against Timarchus,› ‹On the Embassy,› ‹Against Ctesiphon,› and letters, which are included in the edition of G. E. Benseler (1855–60). In his ‹History of Greece,› Grote discusses at length—of course adversely—the influence of Æschines; especially controverting Mitford's favorable view and his denunciation of Demosthenes and the patriotic party. The trend of recent writing is toward Mitford's estimate of Philip's policy, and therefore less blame for the Greek statesmen who supported it, though without Mitford's virulence toward its opponents. Mahaffy (‹Greek Life and Thought›) holds the whole contest over the crown to be mere academic threshing of old straw, the fundamental issues being obsolete by the rise of a new world under Alexander.

A DEFENSE AND AN ATTACK

From the ‹Oration against Ctesiphon›

In regard to the calumnies with which I am attacked, I wish to say a word or two before Demosthenes speaks. He will allege, I am told, that the State has received distinguished services from him, while from me it has suffered injury on many occasions; and that the deeds of Philip and Alexander, and the crimes to which they gave rise, are to be imputed to me. Demosthenes is so clever in the art of speaking that he does not bring accusation against me, against any point in my conduct of affairs or any counsels I may have brought to our public meetings; but he rather casts reflections upon my private life, and charges me with a criminal silence.

Moreover, in order that no circumstance may escape his calumny, he attacks my habits of life when I was in school with my young companions; and even in the introduction of his speech he will say that I have begun this prosecution, not for the benefit of the State, but because I want to make a show of myself to Alexander and gratify Alexander's resentment against him. He purposes, as I learn, to ask why I blame his administration as a whole, and yet never hindered or indicted any one separate act;

why, after a considerable interval of attention to public affairs, I now return to prosecute this action. . . .

But what I am now about to notice—a matter which I hear Demosthenes will speak of—about this, by the Olympian deities, I cannot but feel a righteous indignation. He will liken my speech to the Sirens', it seems, and the legend anent their art is that those who listen to them are not charmed, but destroyed; wherefore the music of the Sirens is not in good repute. Even so he will aver that knowledge of my words and myself is a source of injury to those who listen to me. I, for my part, think it becomes no one to urge such allegations against me; for it is a shame if one who makes charges cannot point to facts as full evidence. And if such charges must be made, the making surely does not become Demosthenes, but rather some military man—some man of action—who has done good work for the State, and who, in his untried speech, vies with the skill of antagonists because he is conscious that he can tell no one of his deeds, and because he sees his accusers able to show his audience that he had done what in fact he never had done. But when a man made up entirely of words,—of sharp words and overwrought sentences,—when he takes refuge in simplicity and plain facts, who then can endure it?—whose tongue is like a flute, inasmuch as if you take it away the rest is nothing. . . .

This man thinks himself worthy of a crown—that his honor should be proclaimed. But should you not rather send into exile this common pest of the Greeks? Or will you not seize upon him as a thief, and avenge yourself upon him whose mouthings have enabled him to bear full sail through our commonwealth? Remember the season in which you cast your vote. In a few days the Pythian Games will come round, and the convention of the Hellenic States will hold its sessions. Our State has been concerned on account of the measures of Demosthenes regarding present crises. You will appear, if you crown him, accessory to those who broke the general peace. But if, on the other hand, you refuse the crown, you will free the State from blame. Do not take counsel as if it were for an alien, but as if it concerned, as it does, the private interest of your city; and do not dispense your honors carelessly, but with judgment; and let your public gifts be the distinctive possession of men most worthy. Not only hear, but also look around you and consider who are the men who support Demosthenes. Are they his fellow-hunters, or his associates in old athletic sports? No, by Olympian Zeus, he was never engaged in hunting the wild boar, nor in care for the well-being of his body; but he was toiling at the art of those who keep up possessions.

Take into consideration also his art of juggling, when he says that by his embassy he wrested Byzantium from the hands of Philip, and that his eloquence led the Acarnanians to revolt, and struck dumb the Thebans. He thinks, forsooth, that you have fallen to such a degree of weakness that he can persuade you that you have been entertaining Persuasion herself in your city, and not a vile slanderer. And when at the conclusion of his argument he calls upon his partners in bribe-taking, then fancy that you see upon these steps, from which I now address you, the benefactors of your State arrayed against the insolence of those men. Solon, who adorned our commonwealth with most noble laws, a man who loved wisdom, a worthy legislator, asking you in dignified and sober manner, as became his character, not to follow the pleading of Demosthenes rather than your oaths and laws. Aristides, who assigned to the Greeks their tributes, to whose daughters after he had died the people gave portions—imagine Aristides complaining bitterly at the insult to public justice, and asking if you are not ashamed that when your fathers banished Arthurias the Zelian, who brought gold from the Medes (although while he was sojourning in the city and a guest of the people of Athens they were scarce restrained from killing him, and by proclamation forbade him the city and any dominion the Athenians had power over), nevertheless that you are going to crown Demosthenes, who did not indeed bring gold from the Medes, but who received bribes and has them still in his possession. And Themistocles and those who died at Marathon and at Platæa, and the very graves of your ancestors—will they not cry out if you venture to grant a crown to one who confesses that he united with the barbarians against the Greeks?

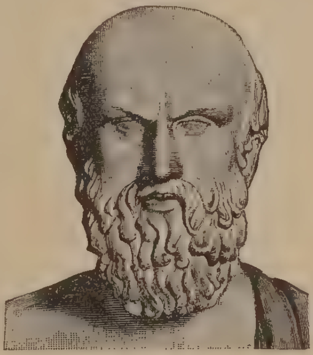
And now, O earth and sun! virtue and intelligence! and thou, O genius of the humanities, who teachest us to judge between the noble and the ignoble, I have come to your succor and I have done. If I have made my pleading with dignity and worthily, as I looked to the flagrant wrong which called it forth, I have spoken as I wished. If I have done ill, it was as I was able. Do you weigh well my words and all that is left unsaid, and vote in accordance with justice and the interests of the city!

ÆSCHYLUS

(B. C. 525–456)

BY JOHN WILLIAMS WHITE

The mightiest of Greek tragic poets was the son of Euphorion, an Athenian noble, and was born B. C. 525. When he was a lad of eleven, the tyrant Hipparchus fell in a public street of Athens under the daggers of Harmodius and Aristogeiton. Later, Æschylus saw the family of tyrants, which for fifty years had ruled Attica with varying fortunes, banished from the land. With a boy's eager interest he followed the establishment of the Athenian democracy by Cleisthenes. He grew to manhood in stirring times. The new State was engaged in war with the powerful neighboring island of Ægina; on the eastern horizon was gathering the cloud that was to burst in storm at Marathon. Æschylus was trained in that early school of Athenian greatness whose masters were Miltiades, Aristides, and Themistocles.


ÆSCHYLUS

During the struggle with Persia, fought out on Greek soil, the poet was at the height of his physical powers, and we may feel confidence in the tradition that he fought not only at Marathon, but also at Salamis. Two of his extant tragedies breathe the very spirit of war, and show a soldier's experience; and the epitaph upon his tomb, which was said to have been written by himself, recorded how he had been one of those who met the barbarians in the first shock of the great struggle and had helped to save his country.

«How brave in battle was Euphorion's son,
The long-haired Mede can tell who fell at Marathon.»

Before Æschylus, Attic tragedy had been essentially lyrical. It arose from the dithyrambic chorus that was sung at the festivals of Dionysus. Thespis had introduced the first actor, who, in the pauses of the choral song, related in monologue the adventures of the god or engaged in dialogue with the leader of the chorus. To Æschylus is due the invention of the second actor. This essentially changed the character of the performance. The dialogue could now be carried on by the two actors, who were thus able to enact a complete story. The functions of the chorus became less important, and the lyrical element was subordinated to the action. (The word «drama» signifies action.) The number of actors was subsequently increased to three, and Æschylus in his later plays used this number. This restriction imposed upon the Greek playwright does not mean that he was limited to two or three characters in his play, but that only two, or at the most three, of these might take part in the action at once. The same actor might assume different parts. The introduction of the second actor was so capital an innovation that it rightly entitles Æschylus to be regarded as the creator of the drama, for in his hands tragedy first became essentially dramatic. This is his great distinction, but his powerful genius wrought other changes. He perfected, if he did not discover, the practice of introducing three plays upon a connected theme (technically named a *trilogy*), with an afterpiece of lighter character. He invented the tragic dress and buskin, and perfected the tragic mask. He improved the tragic dance, and by his use of scenic decoration and stage machinery, secured effects that were unknown before him. His chief claim to superior excellence, however, lies after all in his poetry. Splendid in diction, vivid in the portraiture of character, and powerful in the expression of passion, he is regarded by many competent critics as the greatest tragic poet of all time.

The Greek lexicographer, Suidas, reports that Æschylus wrote ninety plays. The titles of seventy-two of these have been handed down in an ancient register. He brought out the first of these at the age of twenty-five, and as he died at the age of sixty-nine, he wrote on an average two plays each year throughout his lifetime. Such fertility would be incredible, were not similar facts authentically recorded of the older tragic poets of Greece. The Greek drama, moreover, made unusual demands on the creative powers of the poet. It was lyrical, and the lyrics were accompanied by the dance. All these elements — poetry, song, and dance — the poet contributed; and we gain a new sense of the force of the word «poet» (it means «creator»), when we contemplate his triple function. Moreover, he often «staged» the play himself, and sometimes he acted in it. Æschylus was singularly successful in an age that produced many great poets. He took the first prize at least thirteen times; and as he brought out four plays at each contest, more than half his plays were adjudged by his contemporaries to be of the highest quality. After the poet's death, plays which he had written, but which had not been acted in his lifetime, were brought out by his sons and a nephew. It is on record that his son Euphorion took the first prize four times with plays of his father; so the poet's art lived after him and suffered no eclipse.

Only seven complete plays of Æschylus are still extant. The best present source of the text of these is a manuscript preserved in the Laurentian Library, at Florence in Italy, which was written in the tenth or eleventh century after Christ. The number of plays still extant is small, but fortunately, among them is the only complete Greek trilogy that we possess, and luckily also the other four serve to mark successive stages in the poet's artistic development. The trilogy of the 'Oresteia' is certainly his masterpiece; in some of the other plays he is clearly seen to be still bound by the limitations which hampered the earlier writers of Greek tragedy. In the following analysis the seven plays will be presented in their probable chronological order.

The Greeks signally defeated Xerxes in the great sea fight in the bay of Salamis, B. C. 480. The poet made this victory the theme of his 'Persians.' This is the only historical Greek tragedy which we now possess: the subjects of all the rest are drawn from mythology. But Æschylus had a model for his historical play in the 'Phœnician Women' of his predecessor Phrynichus, which dealt with the same theme. Æschylus, indeed, is said to have imitated it closely in the 'Persians.' Plagiarism was thought to be a venial fault by the ancients, just as in the Homeric times piracy was not considered a disgrace. The scene of the play is not Athens, as one might expect, but Susa. It opens without set prologue. The Chorus consists of Persian elders, to whom the government of the country has been committed in the absence of the King. These venerable men gather in front of the royal palace, and their leader opens the play with expressions of apprehension: no news has come from the host absent in Greece. The Chorus at first express full confidence in the resistless might of the great army; but remembering that the gods are jealous of vast power and success in men, yield to gloomy forebodings. These grow stronger when Atossa, the aged mother of Xerxes, appears from the palace and relates the evil dreams which she has had on the previous night, and the omen that followed. The Chorus beseech her to make prayer to the gods, to offer libations to the dead, and especially to invoke the spirit of Darius to avert the evil which threatens his ancient kingdom. Too late! A messenger arrives and announces that all is lost. By one fell stroke the might of Persia has been laid low at Salamis. At Atossa's request, the messenger, interrupted at first by the lamentations of the Chorus, recounts what has befallen. His description of the battle in the straits is a passage of signal power, and is justly celebrated. The Queen retires, and the Chorus sing a song full of gloomy reflections. The Queen reappears, and the ghost of Darius is invoked from the lower world. He hears from Atossa what has happened, sees in this the fulfillment of certain ancient prophecies, foretells disaster still to come, and warns the Chorus against further attempts upon Greece. As he departs to the underworld, the Chorus sing in praise of the wisdom of his reign. Atossa has withdrawn. Xerxes now appears with attendants, laments with the Chorus the disaster that has overtaken him, and finally enters the palace.

The economy of the play is simple: only two actors are required. The first played the parts of Atossa and Xerxes, the second that of the messenger and the ghost of Darius. The play well illustrates the conditions under which Æschylus at this period wrote. The Chorus was still of first importance; the ratio of the choral parts in the play to the dialogue is about one to two.

The exact date of the ‘Suppliants’ cannot be determined; but the simplicity of its plot, the lack of a prologue, the paucity of its characters, and the prominence of the Chorus, show that it is an early play. The scene is Argos. The Chorus consists of the daughters of Danaüs, and there are only three characters,—Danaüs, a Herald, and Pelasgus King of Argos.

Danaüs and Ægyptus, brothers, and descendants of Io and Epaphus, had settled near Canopus at the mouth of the Nile. Ægyptus sought to unite his fifty sons in marriage with the fifty daughters of the brother. The daughters fled with their father to Argos. Here his play opens. The Chorus appeal for protection to the country, once the home of Io, and to its gods and heroes. Pelasgus, with the consent of the Argive people, grants them refuge, and at the end of the play repels the attempt to seize them made by the Herald of the sons of Ægyptus.

A part of one of the choruses is of singular beauty, and it is doubtless to them that the preservation of the play is due. The play hardly seems to be a tragedy, for it ends without bloodshed. Further, it lacks dramatic interest, for the action almost stands still. It is a cantata rather than a tragedy. Both considerations, however, are sufficiently explained by the fact that this was the first play of a trilogy. The remaining plays must have furnished, in the death of forty-nine of the sons of Ægyptus, both action and tragedy in sufficient measure to satisfy the most exacting demands.

The ‘Seven Against Thebes’ deals with the gloomy myth of the house of Laïus. The tetralogy to which it belonged consisted of the ‘Laïus,’ ‘Œdipus,’ ‘Seven Against Thebes,’ and ‘Sphinx.’ The themes of Greek tragedy were drawn from the national mythology, but the myths were treated with a free hand. In his portrayal of the fortunes of this doomed race, Æschylus departed in important particulars, with gain in dramatic effect, from the story as it is read in Homer.

Œdipus had pronounced an awful curse upon his sons, Eteocles and Polynices, for their unfilial neglect, — «they should one day divide their land by steel.» They thereupon agreed to reign in turn, each for a year; but Eteocles, the elder, refused at the end of the first year to give up the throne. Polynices appealed to Adrastus King of Argos for help, and seven chiefs appeared before the walls of Thebes to enforce his claim, and beleaguered the town. Here the play opens, with an appeal addressed by Eteocles to the citizens of Thebes to prove themselves stout defenders of their State in its hour of peril. A messenger enters, and describes the sacrifice and oath of the seven chiefs. The Chorus of Theban maidens enter in confusion and sing the first ode. The hostile army is hurrying from its camp against the town; the Chorus hear their shouts and the rattling din of their arms, and are overcome by terror. Eteocles reproves them for their fears, and bids them sing a pæan that shall hearten the people. The messenger, in a noteworthy scene, describes the appearance of each hostile chief. The seventh and last is Polynices. Eteocles, although conscious of his father's curse, nevertheless declares with gloomy resoluteness that he will meet his brother in single combat, and, resisting the entreaties of the Chorus, goes forth to his doom. The attack on the town is repelled, but the brothers fall, each by the other's hand. Thus is the curse fulfilled. Presently their bodies are wheeled in. Their sisters, Antigone and Ismene, follow and sing a lament over the dead. A herald announces that the Theban Senate forbid the burial of Polynices; his body shall be cast forth as prey of dogs. Antigone declares her resolution to brave their mandate, and perform the last sad rites for her brother.

> «Dread tie, the common womb from which we sprang,—
> Of wretched mother born and hapless sire.»

The Chorus divides. The first semi-chorus sides with Antigone; the second declares its resolution to follow to its last resting-place the body of Eteocles. And thus the play ends. The theme is here sketched, just at the close of the play, in outline, that Sophocles has developed with such pathetic effect in his 'Antigone.'

The 'Prometheus' transports the reader to another world. The characters are gods, the time is the remote past, the place a desolate waste in Scythia, on the confines of the Northern Ocean. Prometheus had sinned against the authority of Zeus. Zeus wished to destroy the old race of mankind; but Prometheus gave them fire, taught them arts and handicrafts, developed in them thought and consciousness, and so assured both their existence and their happiness. The play deals with his punishment. Prometheus is borne upon the scene by Force and Strength, and is nailed to a lofty cliff by Hephæstus. His appeal to Nature, when his tormentors depart and he is left alone, is peculiarly pathetic. The daughters of Oceanus, constituting the Chorus, who have heard the sound of the hammer in their ocean cave, are now borne in aloft on a winged car, and bewail the fate of the outraged god. Oceanus appears upon a winged steed, and offers his mediation; but this is scornfully rejected. The resolution of Prometheus to resist Zeus to the last is strengthened by the coming of Io. She too, as it seems, is a victim of the Ruler of the Universe; driven by the jealous wrath of Hera, she roams from land to land. She tells the tale of her sad wandering, and finally rushes from the scene in frenzy, crazed by the sting of the gadfly that Hera has sent to torment her. Prometheus knows a secret full of menace to Zeus. Relying on this, he prophesies his overthrow, and defies him to do his worst. Hermes is sent to demand with threats its revelation, but fails to accomplish his purpose. Prometheus insults and taunts him. Hermes warns the Chorus to leave, for Zeus is about to display his wrath. At first they refuse, but then fly affrighted: the cliff is rending and sinking, the elements are in wild tumult. As he sinks, about to be engulfed in the bowels of the earth, Prometheus cries:—

«Earth is rocking in space!
And the thunders crash up with a roar upon roar,
And the eddying lightnings flash fire in my face,
And the whirlwinds are whirling the dust round and round,
And the blasts of the winds universal leap free
And blow each upon each with a passion of sound,
And æther goes mingling in storm with the sea.»

The play is Titanic. Its huge shapes, its weird effects, its mighty passions, its wild display of the forces of earth and air,—these impress us chiefly at first; but its ethical interest is far greater. Zeus is apparently represented in it as relentless, cruel, and unjust,—a lawless ruler, who knows only his own will,—whereas in all the other plays of Æschylus he is just and righteous, although sometimes severe. Æschylus, we know, was a religious man. It seems incredible that he should have had two contradictory conceptions of the character of Zeus. The solution of this problem is to be found in the fact that this ‹Prometheus› was the first play of the trilogy. In the second play, the ‹Prometheus Unbound,› of which we have only fragments, these apparent contradictions must have been reconciled. Long ages are supposed to elapse between the plays. Prometheus yields. He reveals the secret and is freed from his bonds. What before seemed to be relentless wanton cruelty is now seen to have been only the harsh but necessary severity of a ruler newly established on his throne. By the reconciliation of this stern ruler with the wise Titan, the giver of good gifts to men, order is restored to the universe. Prometheus acknowledges his guilt, and the course of Zeus is vindicated; but the loss of the second play of the trilogy leaves much in doubt, and an extraordinary number of solutions of the problem has been proposed. The reader must not look for one of these, however, in the 'Prometheus Unbound' of Shelley, who deliberately rejected the supposition of a reconciliation.

The three remaining plays are founded on the woful myth of the house of Atreus, son of Pelops, a theme much treated by the Greek tragic poets. They constitute the only existing Greek trilogy, and are the last and greatest work of the poet. They were brought out at Athens, B. C. 458, two years after the author's death. The 'Agamemnon' sets forth the crime,—the murder, by his wife, of the great King, on his return home from Troy; the 'Choëphori,' the vengeance taken on the guilty wife by her own son; the 'Eumenides,' the atonement made by that son in expiation of his mother's murder.

Agamemnon on departing for Troy left behind him in his palace a son and a daughter, Orestes and Electra. Orestes was exiled from home by his mother Clytemnestra, who in Agamemnon's absence lived in guilty union with Ægisthus, own cousin of the King, and who could no longer endure to look upon the face of her son.

The scene of the 'Agamemnon' is the royal palace in Argos. The time is night. A watchman is discovered on the flat roof of the palace. For a year he has kept weary vigil there, waiting for the beacon-fire that, sped from mountain-top to mountain-top, shall announce the fall of Troy. The signal comes at last, and joyously he proclaims the welcome news. The sacrificial fires which have been made ready in anticipation of the event are set alight throughout the city. The play naturally falls into three divisions. The first introduces the Chorus of Argive elders, Clytemnestra, and a Herald who tells of the hardships of the siege and of the calamitous return, and ends with the triumphal entrance of Agamemnon with Cassandra, and his welcome by the Queen; the second comprehends the prophecy of the frenzied Cassandra of the doom about to fall upon the house and the murder of the King; the third the conflict between the Chorus, still faithful to the murdered King, and Clytemnestra, beside whom stands her paramour Ægisthus.

Interest centres in Clytemnestra. Crafty, unscrupulous, resolute, remorseless, she veils her deadly hatred for her lord, and welcomes him home in tender speech:—

«So now, dear lord, I bid thee welcome home—
True as the faithful watchdog of the fold,
Strong as the mainstay of the laboring bark,
Stately as column, fond as only child,
Dear as the land to shipwrecked mariner,
Bright as fair sunshine after winter's storms,
Sweet as fresh fount to thirsty wanderer—
All this, and more, thou art, dear love, to me.»

Agamemnon passes within the palace; she slays him in his bath, enmeshed in a net, and then, reappearing, vaunts her bloody deed:

«I smote him, and he bellowed; and again
I smote, and with a groan his knees gave way;
And as he fell before me, with a third
And last libation from the deadly mace,
I pledged the crowning draught to Hades due,
That subterranean Saviour—of the dead!
At which he spouted up the Ghost in such
A flood of purple as, bespattered with,
No less did I rejoice than the green ear
Rejoices in the largesse of the skies
That fleeting Iris follows as it flies.»

Æschylus departs from the Homeric account, which was followed by other poets, in making the action of the next play, the ‹Choëphori,› follow closer upon that of the ‹Agamemnon.› Orestes has heard in Phocis of his father's murder, and returns in secret, with his friend Pylades, to exact vengeance. The scene is still Argos, but Agamemnon's tomb is now seen in front of the palace. The Chorus consists of captive women, who aid and abet the attempt. The play sets forth the recognition of Orestes by Electra; the plot by which Orestes gains admission to the palace; the deceit of the old Nurse, a homely but capital character, by whom Ægisthus is induced to come to the palace without armed attendants; the death of Ægisthus and Clytemnestra; the appearance of the avenging Furies; and the flight of Orestes.

The last play of the trilogy, the ‹Eumenides,› has many singular features. The Chorus of Furies seemed even to the ancients to be a weird and terrible invention; the scene of the play shifts from Delphi to Athens; the poet introduces into the play a trial scene; and he had in it a distinct political purpose, whose development occupies one-half of the drama.

Orestes, pursued by the avenging Furies, «Gorgon-like, vested in sable stoles, their locks entwined with clustering snakes,» has fled to Delphi to invoke the aid of Apollo. He clasps the navel-stone and in his exhaustion falls asleep. Around him sleep the Furies. The play opens with a prayer made by the Pythian priestess at an altar in front of the temple. The interior of the sanctuary is then laid bare. Orestes is awake, but the Furies sleep on. Apollo, standing beside Orestes, promises to protect him, but bids him make all haste to Athens, and there clasp, as a suppliant, the image of Athena. Orestes flies. The ghost of Clytemnestra rises from the underworld, and calls upon the Chorus to pursue. Overcome by their toil, they moan in their sleep, but finally start to their feet. Apollo bids them quit the temple.

The scene changes to the ancient temple of Athena on the Acropolis at Athens, where Orestes is seen clasping the image of the goddess. The Chorus enter in pursuit of their victim, and sing an ode descriptive of their powers.

Athena appears, and learns from the Chorus and from Orestes the reasons for their presence. She declares the issue to be too grave even for her to decide, and determines to choose judges of the murder, who shall become a solemn tribunal for all future time. These are to be the best of the citizens of Athens. After an ode by the Chorus, she returns, the court is established, and the trial proceeds in due form. Apollo appears for the defense of Orestes. When the arguments have been presented, Athena proclaims, before the vote has been taken, the establishment of the court as a permanent tribunal for the trial of cases of bloodshed. Its seat shall be the Areopagus. The votes are cast and Orestes is acquitted. He departs for Argos. The Furies break forth in anger and threaten woes to the land, but are appeased by Athena, who establishes their worship forever in Attica. Heretofore they have been the Erinnyes, or Furies; henceforth they shall be the Eumenides, or Gracious Goddesses. The Eumenides are escorted from the scene in solemn procession.

Any analysis of the plays so brief as the preceding is necessarily inadequate. The English reader is referred to the histories of Greek Literature by K. O. Müller and by J. P. Mahaffy, to the striking chapter on Æschylus in J. A. Symonds's 'Greek Poets,' and, for the trilogy, to Moulton's 'Ancient Classical Drama.' If he knows French, he should add Croiset's 'Histoire de la Littérature Grecque,' and should by all means read M. Patin's volume on Æschylus in his 'Études sur les Tragique Grècs.' There are translations in English of the poet's complete works by Potter, by Plumptre, by Blackie, and by Miss Swanwick. Flaxman illustrated the plays. Ancient illustrations are easily accessible in Baumeister's 'Denkmäler,' under the names of the different characters in the plays. There is a translation of the 'Prometheus' by Mrs. Browning, and of the 'Suppliants' by Morshead, who has also translated the Atridean trilogy under the title of 'The House of Atreus.' Goldwin Smith has translated portions of six of the plays in his 'Specimens of Greek Tragedy.' Many translations of the 'Agamemnon' have been made, among others by Milman, by Symmons, by Lord Carnarvon, and by Fitzgerald. Robert Browning also translated the play, with appalling literalness.

THE COMPLAINT OF PROMETHEUS

PROMETHEUS (alone)

O HOLY Æther, and swift-winged Winds,
And River-wells, and laughter innumerous
Of yon Sea-waves! Earth, mother of us all,
And all-viewing cyclic Sun, I cry on you,—
Behold me a god, what I endure from gods!
Behold, with throe on throe,
How, wasted by this woe,
I wrestle down the myriad years of Time!
Behold, how fast around me
The new King of the happy ones sublime
Has flung the chain he forged, has shamed and bound me!
Woe, woe! to-day's woe and the coming morrow's
I cover with one groan. And where is found me
A limit to these sorrows?
And yet what word do I say? I have foreknown
Clearly all things that should be; nothing done
Comes sudden to my soul—and I must bear
What is ordained with patience, being aware
Necessity doth front the universe
With an invincible gesture. Yet this curse
Which strikes me now, I find it hard to brave
In silence or in speech. Because I gave
Honor to mortals, I have yoked my soul
To this compelling fate. Because I stole
The secret fount of fire, whose bubbles went
Over the ferrule's brim, and manward sent
Art's mighty means and perfect rudiment,
That sin I expiate in this agony,
Hung here in fetters, 'neath the blanching sky.
Ah, ah me! what a sound,
What a fragrance sweeps up from a pinion unseen
Of a god, or a mortal, or nature between,
Sweeping up to this rock where the earth has her bound,
To have sight of my pangs, or some guerdon obtain—
Lo, a god in the anguish, a god in the chain!

The god Zeus hateth sore,
And his gods hate again,
As many as tread on his glorified floor,
Because I loved mortals too much evermore.
Alas me! what a murmur and motion I hear,
As of birds flying near!
And the air undersings
The light stroke of their wings—
And all life that approaches I wait for in fear.

From E. B. Browning's Translation of ‹Prometheus.›

A PRAYER TO ARTEMIS

STROPHE IV

Though Zeus plan all things right,
Yet is his heart's desire full hard to trace;
Nathless in every place
Brightly it gleameth, e'en in darkest night,
Fraught with black fate to man's speech-gifted race.

ANTISTROPHE IV

Steadfast, ne'er thrown in fight,
The deed in brow of Zeus to ripeness brought;
For wrapt in shadowy night,
Tangled, unscanned by mortal sight,
Extend the pathways of his secret thought.

STROPHE V

From towering hopes mortals he hurleth prone
To utter doom; but for their fall
No force arrayeth he; for all
That gods devise is without effort wrought.
A mindful Spirit aloft on holy throne
By inborn energy achieves his thought.

ANTISTROPHE V

But let him mortal insolence behold:—
How with proud contumacy rife,
Wantons the stem in lusty life
My marriage craving;—frenzy over-bold,
Spur ever-pricking, goads them on to fate,
By ruin taught their folly all too late.

STROPHE VI

Thus I complain, in piteous strain,
Grief-laden, tear-evoking, shrill;
Ah woe is me! woe! woe!
Dirge-like it sounds; mine own death-trill
I pour, yet breathing vital air.
Hear, hill-crowned Apia, hear my prayer!
Full well, O land,
My voice barbaric thou canst understand;
While oft with rendings I assail
My byssine vesture and Sidonian veil.

ANTISTROPHE VI

My nuptial right in Heaven's pure sight
Pollution were, death-laden, rude;
Ah woe is me! woe! woe!
Alas for sorrow's murky brood!
Where will this billow hurl me? Where?
Hear, hill-crowned Apia, hear my prayer;
Full well, O land,
My voice barbaric thou canst understand,
While oft with rendings I assail
My byssine vesture and Sidonian veil.

STROPHE VII

The oar indeed and home with sails
Flax-tissued, swelled with favoring gales,
Staunch to the wave, from spear-storm free,
Have to this shore escorted me,
Nor so far blame I destiny.
But may the all-seeing Father send
In fitting time propitious end;
So our dread Mother's mighty brood,
The lordly couch may 'scape, ah me,
Unwedded, unsubdued!

ANTISTROPHE VII

Meeting my will with will divine,
Daughter of Zeus, who here dost hold
Steadfast thy sacred shrine,—
Me, Artemis unstained, behold,
Do thou, who sovereign might dost wield,
Virgin thyself, a virgin shield;

So our dread Mother's mighty brood
The lordly couch may 'scape, ah me,
Unwedded, unsubdued!

From Miss Swanwick's Translation of 'The Suppliants.'

THE DEFIANCE OF ETEOCLES

MESSENGER

Now at the Seventh Gate the seventh chief,
Thy proper mother's son, I will announce,
What fortune for this city, for himself,
With curses he invoketh:—on the walls
Ascending, heralded as king, to stand,
With pæans for their capture; then with thee
To fight, and either slaying near thee die,
Or thee, who wronged him, chasing forth alive,
Requite in kind his proper banishment.
Such words he shouts, and calls upon the gods
Who o'er his race preside and Fatherland,
With gracious eye to look upon his prayers.
A well-wrought buckler, newly forged, he bears,
With twofold blazon riveted thereon,
For there a woman leads, with sober mien,
A mailèd warrior, enchased in gold;
Justice her style, and thus the legend speaks:—
"This man I will restore, and he shall hold
The city and his father's palace homes."
Such the devices of the hostile chiefs.
'Tis for thyself to choose whom thou wilt send;
But never shalt thou blame my herald-words.
To guide the rudder of the State be thine!

ETEOCLES

O heaven-demented race of Œdipus,
My race, tear-fraught, detested of the gods!
Alas, our father's curses now bear fruit.
But it beseems not to lament or weep,
Lest lamentations sadder still be born.
For him, too truly Polyneikes named,—
What his device will work we soon shall know;
Whether his braggart words, with madness fraught,
Gold-blazoned on his shield, shall lead him back.
Hath Justice communed with, or claimed him hers,

Guided his deeds and thoughts, this might have been;
But neither when he fled the darksome womb,
Or in his childhood, or in youth's fair prime,
Or when the hair thick gathered on his chin,
Hath Justice communed with, or claimed him hers,
Nor in this outrage on his Fatherland
Deem I she now beside him deigns to stand.
For Justice would in sooth belie her name,
Did she with this all-daring man consort.
In these regards confiding will I go,
Myself will meet him. Who with better right?
Brother to brother, chieftain against chief,
Foeman to foe, I'll stand. Quick, bring my spear,
My greaves, and armor, bulwark against stones.

From Miss Swanwick's Translation of ‹The Seven Against Thebes.›

THE VISION OF CASSANDRA

CASSANDRA

PHŒBUS APOLLO!

CHORUS

Hark!
The lips at last unlocking.

CASSANDRA

Phœbus! Phœbus!

CHORUS

Well, what of Phœbus, maiden? though a name
'Tis but disparagement to call upon
In misery.

CASSANDRA

Apollo! Apollo! Again!
Oh, the burning arrow through the brain!
Phœbus Apollo! Apollo!

CHORUS

Seemingly
Possessed indeed—whether by—

CASSANDRA

Phœbus! Phœbus!
Through trampled ashes, blood, and fiery rain,

Over water seething, and behind the breathing
War-horse in the darkness—till you rose again,
Took the helm—took the rein—

CHORUS

As one that half asleep at dawn recalls
A night of Horror!

CASSANDRA

Hither, whither, Phœbus? And with whom,
Leading me, lighting me—

CHORUS

I can answer that—

CASSANDRA

Down to what slaughter-house!
Foh! the smell of carnage through the door
Scares me from it—drags me toward it—
Phœbus Apollo! Apollo!

CHORUS

One of the dismal prophet-pack, it seems,
That hunt the trail of blood. But here at fault—
This is no den of slaughter, but the house
Of Agamemnon.

CASSANDRA

Down upon the towers,
Phantoms of two mangled children hover—and a famished man,
At an empty table glaring, seizes and devours!

CHORUS

Thyestes and his children! Strange enough
For any maiden from abroad to know,
Or, knowing—

CASSANDRA

And look! in the chamber below
The terrible Woman, listening, watching,
Under a mask, preparing the blow
In the fold of her robe—

CHORUS

Nay, but again at fault:
For in the tragic story of this House—

Unless, indeed the fatal Helen—
No woman—

CASSANDRA

No Woman—Tisiphone! Daughter
Of Tartarus—love-grinning Woman above,
Dragon-tailed under—honey-tongued, Harpy-clawed,
Into the glittering meshes of slaughter
She wheedles, entices him into the poisonous
Fold of the serpent—

CHORUS

Peace, mad woman, peace!
Whose stony lips once open vomit out
Such uncouth horrors.

CASSANDRA

I tell you the lioness
Slaughters the Lion asleep; and lifting
Her blood-dripping fangs buried deep in his mane,
Glaring about her insatiable, bellowing,
Bounds hither—Phœbus Apollo, Apollo, Apollo!
Whither have you led me, under night alive with fire,
Through the trampled ashes of the city of my sire,
From my slaughtered kinsmen, fallen throne, insulted shrine,
Slave-like to be butchered, the daughter of a royal line!

From Edward Fitzgerald's Version of the ‹Agamemnon.›

THE LAMENT OF THE OLD NURSE

NURSE

Our mistress bids me with all speed to call
Ægisthus to the strangers, that he come
And hear more clearly, as a man from man,
This newly brought report. Before her slaves,
Under set eyes of melancholy cast,
She hid her inner chuckle at the events
That have been brought to pass—too well for her,
But for this house and hearth most miserably,—
As in the tale the strangers clearly told.
He, when he hears and learns the story's gist,
Will joy, I trow, in heart. Ah, wretched me!
How those old troubles, of all sorts made up,
Most hard to bear, in Atreus's palace-halls

Have made my heart full heavy in my breast!
But never have I known a woe like this.
For other ills I bore full patiently,
But as for dear Orestes, my sweet charge,
Whom from his mother I received and nursed . . .
And then the shrill cries rousing me o' nights,
And many and unprofitable toils
For me who bore them. For one needs must rear
The heedless infant like an animal,
(How can it else be?) as his humor serve
For while a child is yet in swaddling clothes,
It speaketh not, if either hunger comes,
Or passing thirst, or lower calls of need;
And children's stomach works its own content.
And I, though I foresaw this, call to mind,
How I was cheated, washing swaddling clothes,
And nurse and laundress did the selfsame work.
I then with these my double handicrafts,
Brought up Orestes for his father dear;
And now, woe's me! I learn that he is dead,
And go to fetch the man that mars this house;
And gladly will he hear these words of mine.

From Plumptre's Translation of ‹The Libation-Pourers.›

THE DECREE OF ATHENA

HEAR ye my statute, men of Attica—
Ye who of bloodshed judge this primal cause;
Yea, and in future age shall Ægeus's host
Revere this court of jurors. This the hill
Of Ares, seat of Amazons, their tent,
What time 'gainst Theseus, breathing hate, they came,
Waging fierce battle, and their towers upreared,
A counter-fortress to Acropolis;—
To Ares they did sacrifice, and hence
This rock is titled Areopagus.
Here then shall sacred Awe, to Fear allied,
By day and night my lieges hold from wrong,
Save if themselves do innovate my laws,
If thou with mud, or influx base, bedim
The sparkling water, nought thou'lt find to drink.
Nor Anarchy, nor Tyrant's lawless rule
Commend I to my people's reverence;—
Nor let them banish from their city Fear;

For who 'mong men, uncurbed by fear, is just?
Thus holding Awe in seemly reverence,
A bulwark for your State shall ye possess,
A safeguard to protect your city walls,
Such as no mortals otherwhere can boast,
Neither in Scythia, nor in Pelops's realm.
Behold! This Court august, untouched by bribes,
Sharp to avenge, wakeful for those who sleep,
Establish I, a bulwark to this land.
This charge, extending to all future time,
I give my lieges. Meet it as ye rise,
Assume the pebbles, and decide the cause,
Your oath revering. All hath now been said.

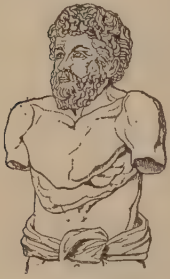
From Miss Swanwick's Translation of ‹The Eumenides.›

ÆSOP

(Seventh Century B. C.)

BY HARRY THURSTON PECK

Like Homer, the greatest of the world's epic poets, Æsop (Æsopus), the most famous of the world's fabulists, has been regarded by certain scholars as a wholly mythical personage. The many improbable stories that are told about him gain some credence for this theory, which is set forth in detail by the Italian scholar Vico, who says:—«Æsop, regarded philosophically, will be found not to have been an actually existing man, but rather an abstraction representing a class,»—in other words, merely a convenient invention of the later Greeks, who ascribed to him all the fables of which they could find no certain author.



Æsop

The only narrative upon which the ancient writers are in the main agreed represents Æsop as living in the seventh century before Christ. As with Homer, so with Æsop, several cities of Asia Minor claimed the honor of having been his birthplace. Born a slave and hideously ugly, his keen wit led his admiring master to set him free; after which he traveled, visiting Athens, where he is said to have told his fable of King Log and King Stork to the citizens who were complaining of the rule of Pisistratus. Still later, having won the favor of King

Crœsus of Lydia, he was sent by him to Delphi with a gift of money for the citizens of that place; but in the course of a dispute as to its distribution, he was slain by the Delphians, who threw him over a precipice.

The fables that bore his name seem not to have been committed by him to writing, but for a long time were handed down from generation to generation by oral tradition; so that the same fables are sometimes found quoted in slightly different forms, and we hear of men learning them in conversation rather than from books. They were, however, universally popular. Socrates while in prison amused himself by turning some of them into verse. Aristophanes cites them in his plays; and he tells how certain suitors once tried to win favor of a judge by repeating to him some of the amusing stories of Æsop. The Athenians even erected a statue in his honor. At a later period, the fables were gathered together and published by the Athenian statesman and orator, Demetrius Phalereus, in B. C. 320, and were versified by Babrius (of uncertain date), whose collection is the only one in Greek of which any substantial portion still survives. They were often translated by the Romans, and the Latin version by Phædrus, the freedman of Augustus Cæsar, is still preserved and still used as a school-book. Forty-two of them are likewise found in a Latin work by one Avianus, dating from the fifth century after Christ. During the Middle Ages, when much of the classical literature had been lost or forgotten, Æsop, who was called by the mediævals «Isopet,» was still read in various forms; and in modern times he has served as a model for a great number of imitations, of which the most successful are those in French by Lafontaine and those in English by John Gay.

Whether or not such a person as Æsop ever lived, and whether or not he actually narrated the fables that are ascribed to him, it is certain that he did not himself invent them, but merely gave them currency in Greece; for they can be shown to have existed long before his time, and in fact to antedate even the beginnings of Hellenic civilization. With some changes of form they are found in the oldest literature of the Chinese; similar stories are preserved on the inscribed Babylonian bricks; and an Egyptian papyrus of about the year 1200 B. C. gives the fable of ‹The Lion and the Mouse› in its finished form. Other Æsopic apologues are essentially identical with the Jatakas or Buddhist stories of India, and occur also in the great Sanskrit story-book, the ‹Panchatantra,› which is the very oldest monument of Hindu literature.

The so-called Æsopic Fables are in fact only a part of the primitive folk-lore, that springs up in prehistoric times, and passes from country to country and from race to race by the process of popular story-telling. They reached Greece, undoubtedly through Egypt and Persia, and even in their present form they still retain certain Oriental, or at any rate non-Hellenic elements, such as the introduction of Eastern animals,—the panther, the peacock, and the ape. They represent the beginnings of conscious literary effort, when man first tried to enforce some maxim of practical wisdom and to teach some useful truth through the fascinating medium of a story. The Fable embodies a half-unconscious desire to give concrete form to an abstract principle, and a childish love for the picturesque and striking, which endows rocks and stones and trees with life, and gives the power of speech to animals.

That beasts with the attributes of human beings should figure in these tales involves, from the standpoint of primeval man, only a very slight divergence from probability. In nothing, perhaps, has civilization so changed us as in our mental attitude toward animals. It has fixed a great gulf between us and them — a gulf far greater than that which divided them from our first ancestors. In the early ages of the world, when men lived by the chase, and gnawed the raw flesh of their prey, and slept in lairs amid the jungle, the purely animal virtues were the only ones they knew and exercised. They adored courage and strength, and swiftness and endurance. They respected keenness of scent and vision, and admired cunning. The possession of these qualities was the very condition of existence, and they valued them accordingly; but in each one of them they found their equals, and in fact their superiors, among the brutes. A lion was stronger than the strongest man. The hare was swifter. The eagle was more keen-sighted. The fox was more cunning. Hence, so far from looking down upon the animals from the remotely superior height that a hundred centuries of civilization have erected for us, the primitive savage looked up to the beast, studied his ways, copied him, and went to school to him. The man, then, was not in those days the lord of creation, and the beast was not his servant; but they were almost brothers in the subtle sympathy between them, like that which united Mowgli, the wolf-nursed *shikarri*, and his hairy brethren, in that most weirdly wonderful of all Mr. Kipling's inventions — the one that carries us back, not as his other stories do, to the India of the cities and the bazaars, of the supercilious tourist and the sleek Babu, but to the older India of unbroken jungle, darkling at noonday through its green mist of tangled leaves, and haunted by memories of the world's long infancy when man and brute crouched close together on the earthy breast of the great mother.

The Æsopic Fables, then, are the oldest representative that we have of the literary art of primitive man. The charm that they have always possessed springs in part from their utter simplicity, their naïveté, and their directness; and in part from the fact that their teachings are the teachings of universal experience, and therefore appeal irresistibly to the consciousness of every one who hears them, whether he be savage or scholar, child or sage. They are the literary antipodes of the last great effort of genius and art working upon the same material, and found in Mr. Kipling's Jungle Books. The Fables show only the first stirrings of the literary instinct, the Jungle Stories bring to bear the full development of the fictive art, — creative imagination, psychological insight, brilliantly picturesque description, and the touch of one who is a daring master of vivid language; so that no better theme can be given to a student of literary history than the critical comparison of these two allied forms of composition, representing as they do the two extremes of actual development.

The best general account in English of the origin of the Greek Fable is that of Rutherford in the introduction to his 'Babrius' (London, 1883). An excellent special study of the history of the Æsopic Fables is that by Joseph Jacobs in the first volume of his 'Æsop' (London, 1889). The various ancient accounts of Æsop's life are collected by Simrock in 'Æsops Leben' (1864). The best scientific edition of the two hundred and ten fables is that of Halm (Leipzig, 1887). Good disquisitions on their history during the Middle Ages are those of Du Méril in French (Paris, 1854) and Bruno in German (Bamberg, 1892). See also the articles in the present work under the titles 'Babrius,' 'Bidpai,' 'John Gay,' 'Lafontaine,' 'Lokman,' 'Panchatantra,' 'Phædrus,' 'Reynard the Fox.'

H. T. Peck

THE FOX AND THE LION

The first time the Fox saw the Lion, he fell down at his feet, and was ready to die of fear. The second time, he took courage and could even bear to look upon him. The third time, he had the impudence to come up to him, to salute him, and to enter into familiar conversation with him.

THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN

An Ass, finding the skin of a Lion, put it on; and, going into the woods and pastures, threw all the flocks and herds into a terrible consternation. At last, meeting his owner, he would have frightened him also; but the good man, seeing his long ears stick out, presently knew him, and with a good cudgel made him sensible that, notwithstanding his being dressed in a Lion's skin, he was really no more than an Ass.

THE ASS EATING THISTLES

An Ass was loaded with good provisions of several sorts, which, in time of harvest, he was carrying into the field for his master and the reapers to dine upon. On the way he met with a fine large thistle, and being very hungry, began to mumble it; which while he was doing, he entered into this reflection:—"How many greedy epicures would think themselves happy, amidst such a variety of delicate viands as I now carry! But to me this bitter, prickly thistle is more savory and relishing than the most exquisite and sumptuous banquet."

THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

A Wolf, clothing himself in the skin of a sheep, and getting in among the flock, by this means took the opportunity to devour many of them. At last the shepherd discovered him, and cunningly fastening a rope about his neck, tied him up to a tree which stood hard by. Some other shepherds happening to pass that way, and observing what he was about, drew near, and expressed their admiration at it. "What!" says one of them, "brother, do you make hanging of a sheep?" "No," replied the other, "but I make hanging of a Wolf whenever I catch him, though in the habit and garb of a sheep." Then he showed them their mistake, and they applauded the justice of the execution.

THE COUNTRYMAN AND THE SNAKE

A Villager, in a frosty, snowy winter, found a Snake under a hedge, almost dead with cold. He could not help having a compassion for the poor creature, so brought it home, and laid it upon the hearth, near the fire; but it had not lain there long, before (being revived with the heat) it began to erect itself, and fly at his wife and children, filling the whole cottage with dreadful hissings. The Countryman heard an outcry, and perceiving what the matter was, catched up a mattock and soon dispatched him; upbraiding him at the same time in these words:—"Is this, vile wretch, the reward you make to him that saved your life? Die as you deserve; but a single death is too good for you."

THE BELLY AND THE MEMBERS

In former days, when the Belly and the other parts of the body enjoyed the faculty of speech, and had separate views and designs of their own, each part, it seems, in particular for himself, and in the name of the whole, took exception to the conduct of the Belly, and were resolved to grant him supplies no longer. They said they thought it very hard that he should lead an idle, good-for-nothing life, spending and squandering away, upon his own ungodly guts, all the fruits of their labor; and that, in short, they were resolved, for the future, to strike off his allowance, and let him shift for himself as well as he could. The Hands protested they would not lift up a finger to keep him from starving; and the Mouth wished he might never speak again if he took in the least bit of nourishment for him as long as he lived; and, said the Teeth, may we be rotten if ever we chew a morsel for him for the future. This solemn league and covenant was kept as long as anything of that kind can be kept, which was until each of the rebel members pined away to skin and bone, and could hold out no longer. Then they found there was no doing without the Belly, and that, idle and insignificant as he seemed, he contributed as much to the maintenance and welfare of all the other parts as they did to his.

THE SATYR AND THE TRAVELER

A Satyr, as he was ranging the forest in an exceeding cold, snowy season, met with a Traveler half-starved with the extremity of the weather. He took compassion on him, and kindly invited him home to a warm, comfortable cave he had in the hollow of a rock. As soon as they had entered and sat down, notwithstanding there was a good fire in the place, the chilly Traveler could not forbear blowing his fingers' ends. Upon the Satyr's asking why he did so, he answered, that he did it to warm his hands. The honest sylvan having seen little of the world, admired a man who was master of so valuable a quality as that of blowing heat, and therefore was resolved to entertain him in the best manner he could. He spread the table before him with dried fruits of several sorts; and produced a remnant of cold wine, which as the rigor of the season made very proper, he mulled with some warm spices, infused over the fire, and presented to his shivering guest. But this the Traveler thought fit to blow likewise; and upon the Satyr's demanding a reason why he blowed again, he replied, to cool his dish. This second answer provoked the Satyr's indignation as much as the first had kindled his surprise: so, taking the man by the shoulder, he thrust him out of doors, saying he would have nothing to do with a wretch who had so vile a quality as to blow hot and cold with the same mouth.

THE LION AND THE OTHER BEASTS

The Lion and several other beasts entered into an alliance, offensive and defensive, and were to live very sociably together in the forest. One day, having made a sort of an excursion by way of hunting, they took a very fine, large, fat deer, which was divided into four parts; there happening to be then present his Majesty the Lion, and only three others. After the division was made, and the parts were set out, his Majesty, advancing forward some steps and pointing to one of the shares, was pleased to declare himself after the following manner: — "This I seize and take possession of as my right, which devolves to me, as I am descended by a true, lineal, hereditary succession from the royal family of Lion. That [pointing to the second] I claim by, I think, no unreasonable demand; considering that all the engagements you have with the enemy turn chiefly upon my courage and conduct, and you very well know that wars are too expensive to be carried on without proper supplies. Then [nodding his head toward the third] that I shall take by virtue of my prerogative; to which, I make no question but so dutiful and loyal a people will pay all the deference and regard that I can desire. Now, as for the remaining part, the necessity of our present affairs is so very urgent, our stock so low, and our credit so impaired and weakened, that I must insist upon your granting that, without any hesitation or demur; and hereof fail not at your peril."

THE ASS AND THE LITTLE DOG

The Ass, observing how great a favorite the little Dog was with his Master, how much caressed and fondled, and fed with good bits at every meal; and for no other reason, as he could perceive, but for skipping and frisking about, wagging his tail, and leaping up into his Master's lap: he was resolved to imitate the same, and see whether such a behavior would not procure him the same favors. Accordingly, the Master was no sooner come home from walking about his fields and gardens, and was seated in his easy-chair, but the Ass, who observed him, came gamboling and braying towards him, in a very awkward manner. The Master could not help laughing aloud at the odd sight. But his jest was soon turned into earnest, when he felt the rough salute of the Ass's fore-feet, who, raising himself upon his hinder legs, pawed against his breast with a most loving air, and would fain have jumped into his lap. The good man, terrified at this outrageous behavior, and unable to endure the weight of so heavy a beast, cried out; upon which, one of his servants running in with a good stick, and laying on heartily upon the bones of the poor Ass, soon convinced him that every one who desires it is not qualified to be a favorite.

THE COUNTRY MOUSE AND THE CITY MOUSE

An honest, plain, sensible Country Mouse is said to have entertained at his hole one day a fine Mouse of the Town. Having formerly been playfellows together, they were old acquaintances, which served as an apology for the visit. However, as master of the house, he thought himself obliged to do the honors of it in all respects, and to make as great a stranger of his guest as he possibly could. In order to do this he set before him a reserve of delicate gray pease and bacon, a dish of fine oatmeal, some parings of new cheese, and, to crown all with a dessert, a remnant of a charming mellow apple. In good manners, he forbore to eat any himself, lest the stranger should not have enough; but that he might seem to bear the other company, sat and nibbled a piece of a wheaten straw very busily. At last, says the spark of the town:—"Old crony, give me leave to be a little free with you: how can you bear to live in this nasty, dirty, melancholy hole here, with nothing but woods, and meadows, and mountains, and rivulets about you? Do not you prefer the conversation of the world to the chirping of birds, and the splendor of a court to the rude aspect of an uncultivated desert? Come, take my word for it, you will find it a change for the better. Never stand considering, but away this moment. Remember, we are not immortal, and therefore have no time to lose. Make sure of to-day, and spend it as agreeably as you can: you know not what may happen to-morrow." In short, these and such like arguments prevailed, and his Country Acquaintance was resolved to go to town that night. So they both set out upon their journey together, proposing to sneak in after the close of the evening. They did so; and about midnight made their entry into a certain great house, where there had been an extraordinary entertainment the day before, and several tit-bits, which some of the servants had purloined, were hid under the seat of a window. The Country Guest was immediately placed in the midst of a rich Persian carpet: and now it was the Courtier's turn to entertain; who indeed acquitted himself in that capacity with the utmost readiness and address, changing the courses as elegantly, and tasting everything first as judiciously, as any clerk of the kitchen. The other sat and enjoyed himself like a delighted epicure, tickled to the last degree with this new turn of his affairs; when on a sudden, a noise of somebody opening the door made them start from their seats, and scuttle in confusion about the dining-room. Our Country Friend, in particular, was ready to die with fear at the barking of a huge mastiff or two, which opened their throats just about the same time, and made the whole house echo. At last, recovering himself:—"Well," says he, "if this be your town-life, much good may you do with it: give me my poor, quiet hole again, with my homely but comfortable gray pease."

THE DOG AND THE WOLF

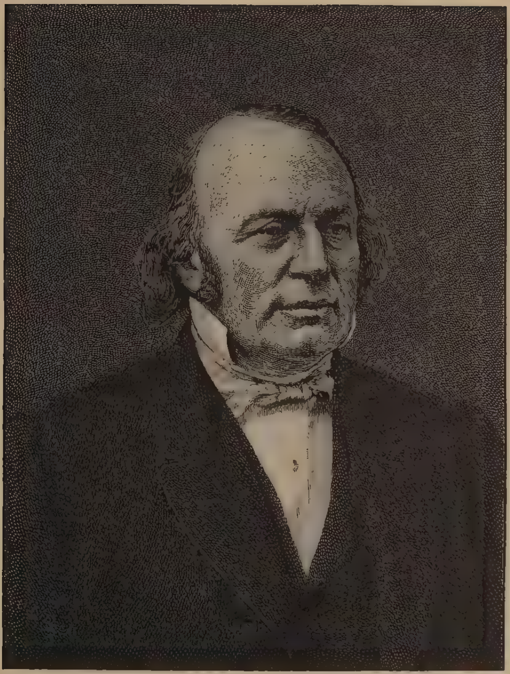
A LEAN, hungry, half-starved Wolf happened, one moonshiny night, to meet with a jolly, plump, well-fed Mastiff; and after the first compliments were passed, says the Wolf:—"You look extremely well. I protest, I think I never saw a more graceful, comely person; but how comes it about, I beseech you, that you should live so much better than I? I may say, without vanity, that I venture fifty times more than you do; and yet I am almost ready to perish with hunger." The Dog answered very bluntly, "Why, you may live as well, if you will do the same for it that I do."—"Indeed? what is that?" says he.—"Why," says the Dog, "only to guard the house a-nights, and keep it from thieves."—"With all my heart," replies the Wolf, "for at present I have but a sorry time of it; and I think to change my hard lodging in the woods, where I endure rain, frost, and snow, for a warm roof over my head, and a bellyful of good victuals, will be no bad bargain."—"True," says the Dog; "therefore you have nothing more to do but to follow me." Now, as they were jogging on together, the Wolf spied a crease in the Dog's neck, and having a strange curiosity, could not forbear asking him what it meant. "Pooh! nothing," says the Dog.—"Nay, but pray—" says the Wolf.—"Why," says the Dog, "if you must know, I am tied up in the daytime, because I am a little fierce, for fear I should bite people, and am only let loose a-nights. But this is done with design to make me sleep a-days, more than anything else, and that I may watch the better in the night-time; for as soon as ever the twilight appears, out I am turned, and may go where I please. Then my master brings me plates of bones from the table with his own hands, and whatever scraps are left by any of the family, all fall to my share; for you must know I am a favorite with everybody. So you see how you are to live. Come, come along: what is the matter with you?"—"No," replied the Wolf, "I beg your pardon: keep your happiness all to yourself. Liberty is the word with me; and I would not be a king upon the terms you mention."

JEAN LOUIS RODOLPHE AGASSIZ

(1807–1873)

"AT FIRST, when a mere boy, twelve years of age," writes the great Swiss naturalist, "I did what most beginners do. I picked up whatever I could lay my hands on, and tried, by such books and authorities as I had at my command, to find the names of these objects. My highest ambition at that time, was to be able to designate the plants and animals of my native country correctly by a Latin name, and to extend gradually a similar knowledge in its application to the productions of other countries. This seemed to me, in those days, the legitimate aim and proper work of a naturalist. I still possess manuscript volumes in which I entered the names of all the animals and plants with which I became acquainted, and I well remember that I then ardently hoped to acquire the same superficial familiarity with the whole creation. I did not then know how much more important it is to the naturalist to understand the structure of a few animals than to command the whole field of scientific nomenclature. Since I have become a teacher, and have watched the progress of students, I have seen that they all begin in the same way. But how many have grown old in the pursuit, without ever rising to any higher conception of the study of nature, spending their life in the determination of species, and in extending scientific terminology! Long before I went to the university, and before I began to study natural history under the guidance of men who were masters in the science during the early part of this century, I perceived that though nomenclature and classification, as then understood, formed an important part of the study, being, in fact, its technical language, the study of living beings in their natural element was of infinitely greater value. At that age—namely, about fifteen—I spent most of the time I could spare from classical and mathematical studies in hunting the neighboring woods and meadows for birds, insects, and land and fresh-water shells. My room became a little menagerie, while the stone basin under the fountain in our yard was my reservoir for all the fishes I could catch. Indeed, collecting, fishing, and raising caterpillars, from which I reared fresh, beautiful butterflies, were then my chief pastimes. What I know of the habits of the fresh-water fishes of Central Europe I mostly learned at that time; and I may add, that when afterward I obtained access to a large library and could consult the works of Bloch and Lacépède, the only extensive works on fishes then in existence, I wondered that they contained so little about their habits, natural attitudes, and mode of action, with which I was so familiar."

It is this way of looking at things that gives to Agassiz's writings their literary and popular interest. He was born in Mortier, Canton Fribourg, May 28th, 1807, the son of a clergyman, who sent his gifted son to the Universities of Zürich, Heidelberg, and Munich, where he acquired reputation for his brilliant powers, and entered into the enthusiastic, intellectual, and merry student-life, taking his place in the formal duels, and becoming known as a champion fencer. Agassiz was an influence in every centre that he touched; and in Munich, his room and his laboratory, thick with clouds of smoke from the long-stemmed German pipes, was a gathering-place for the young



J. L. R. AGASSIZ.

scientific aspirants, who affectionately called it «The Little Academy.» At the age of twenty-two, he had published his ‹Fishes of Brazil,› a folio that brought him into immediate recognition. Cuvier, the greatest ichthyologist of his time, to whom the first volume was dedicated, received him as a pupil, and gave to him all the material that he had been collecting during fifteen years for a contemplated work on Fossil Fishes. In Paris Agassiz also won the friendship of Humboldt, who, learning that he stood in need of money, presented him with so generous a sum as to enable the ambitious young naturalist to work with a free and buoyant spirit.

His practical career began in 1832, when he was installed at Neufchâtel, from which point he easily studied the Alps. Two years later, after the ‹Poissons fossiles› (Fossil Fishes) appeared, he visited England to lecture. Then returning to his picturesque home, he applied himself to original investigation, and through his lectures and publications won honors and degrees. His daring opinions, however, sometimes provoked ardent discussion and angry comment.

Agassiz's passion for investigation frequently led him into dangers that imperiled both life and limb. In the summer of 1841, for example, he was lowered into a deep crevasse bristling with huge stalactites of ice, to reach the heart of a glacier moving at the rate of forty feet a day. While he was observing the blue bands on the glittering ice, he suddenly touched a well of water, and only after great difficulty made his companions understand his signal for rescue. These Alpine experiences are well described by Mrs. Elizabeth Cary Agassiz, and also by Edouard Desors in his ‹Séjours dans les Glaciers› (Sojourn among the Glaciers: Neufchâtel, 1844). Interesting particulars of these glacial studies (‹Études des Glaciers›) were soon issued, and Agassiz received many gifts from lovers of science, among whom was numbered the King of Prussia. His zoölogical and geological investigations were continued, and important works on ‹Fossil Mollusks,› ‹Tertiary Shells,› and ‹Living and Fossil Echinoderms› date from this period.

He had long desired to visit America, when he realized this wish in 1846 by an arrangement with the Lowell Institute of Boston, where he gave a series of lectures, afterwards repeated in various cities. So attractive did he find the fauna and flora of America, and so vast a field did he perceive here for his individual studies and instruction, that he returned the following year. In 1848 the Prussian government, which had borne the expenses of his scientific mission, —a cruise along our Atlantic coast to study its marine life,—released him from further obligation that he might accept the chair of geology in the Lawrence Scientific School of Harvard University. His cruises, his explorations, and his methods, combined with his attractive personality, gave him unique power as a teacher; and many of his biographers think that of all his gifts, the ability to instruct was the most conspicuous. He needed no text-books, for he went directly to Nature, and did not believe in those technical, dry-as-dust terms which lead to nothing and which are swept away by the next generation. Many noted American men of science remember the awakening influence of his laboratories in Charleston and Cambridge, his museum at Harvard, and his summer school at Penikese Island in Buzzard's Bay, Massachusetts, where natural history was studied under ideal conditions. It was here that he said to his class:—«A laboratory of natural history is a sanctuary where nothing profane should be tolerated.» Whittier has left a poem called «The Prayer of Agassiz,» describing

«The isle of Penikese
Ranged about by sapphire seas.»

Just as he was realizing two of his ambitions, the establishment of a great museum and a practical school of zoölogy, he died, December 14th, 1873, at his home in Cambridge, and was buried at Mount Auburn beneath pine-trees sent from Switzerland, while a bowlder from the glacier of the Aar was selected to mark his resting-place.

Agassiz was greatly beloved by his pupils and associates, and was identified with the brilliant group—Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell,—each of whom has written of him. Lowell considered his 'Elegy on Agassiz,' written in Florence in 1874, among his best verses; Longfellow wrote a poem for 'The Fiftieth Birthday of Agassiz,' and Holmes 'A Farewell to Agassiz' on his departure for the Andes, whose affectionate and humorous strain thus closes:—

«Till their glorious raid is o'er,
And they touch our ransomed shore!
Then the welcome of a nation,
With its shout of exultation,
Shall awake the dumb creation,
And the shapes of buried æons
Join the living creatures' pæans,
While the mighty megalosaurus
Leads the palæozoic chorus,—
God bless the great Professor,
And the land its proud possessor,—
Bless them now and evermore!»

Numerous biographies and monographs of Agassiz exist in many languages, a complete list of which is given in the last published 'Life of Agassiz,' by Jules Marcou (New York and London, 1896), and also in the 'Life of Agassiz,' by Charles F. Holder (New York, 1893). Complete lists of Agassiz's works are also given in these biographies, and these titles show how versatile was his taste and how deep and wide his research. His principal contributions to science are in French and Latin, but his most popular books appeared in English. These include 'The Structure of Animal Life,' 'Methods of Study,' 'Geological Sketches,' and 'Journey in Brazil,' the latter written with Mrs. Agassiz. His 'Contributions to the Natural History of the United States,' planned to be in ten large books, only reached four volumes.

In his 'Researches concerning Fossil Fishes,' Agassiz expressed the views that made him a lifelong opponent of the Darwinian theories, although he was a warm friend of Darwin. Considering the demands upon his time as teacher, lecturer, and investigator, the excellence not less than the amount of the great naturalist's work is remarkable, and won such admiration that he was made a member of nearly every scientific society in the world. One of his favorite pastimes was deep-sea dredging, which embraced the excitement of finding strange specimens and studying their singular habits.

Of his love and gift for instructing, Mrs. Agassiz says in her 'Life' (Boston, 1885):—

> «Teaching was a passion with him, and his power over his pupils might be measured by his own enthusiasm. He was, intellectually as well as socially, a democrat in the best sense. He delighted to scatter broadcast the highest results of thought and research, and to adapt them even to the youngest and most uninformed minds. In his later American travels he would talk of glacial phenomena to the driver of a country stage-coach among the mountains, or to some workman splitting rock at the roadside, with as much earnestness as if he had been discussing problems with a brother geologist; he would take the common fisherman into his scientific confidence, telling him the intimate secrets of fish-culture or fish-embryology, till the man in his turn grew enthusiastic and began to pour out information from the stores of his own rough and untaught habits of observation. Agassiz's general faith in the susceptibility of the popular intelligence, however untaught, to the highest truths of nature, was contagious, and he created or developed that in which he believed.»

The following citations exhibit his powers of observation, and that happy method of stating scientific facts which interests the specialist and general reader alike.

THE SILURIAN BEACH

From ‹Geological Sketches›

With what interest do we look upon any relic of early human history! The monument that tells of a civilization whose hieroglyphic records we cannot even decipher, the slightest trace of a nation that vanished and left no sign of its life except the rough tools and utensils buried in the old site of its towns or villages, arouses our imagination and excites our curiosity. Men gaze with awe at the inscription on an ancient Egyptian or Assyrian stone; they hold with reverential touch the yellow parchment-roll whose dim, defaced characters record the meagre learning of a buried nationality; and the announcement that for centuries the tropical forests of Central America have hidden within their tangled growth the ruined homes and temples of a past race, stirs the civilized world with a strange, deep wonder.

To me it seems, that to look on the first land that was ever lifted above the wasted waters, to follow the shore where the earliest animals and plants were created when the thought of God first expressed itself in organic forms, to hold in one's hand a bit of stone from an old sea-beach, hardened into rock thousands of centuries ago, and studded with the beings that once crept upon its surface or were stranded there by some retreating wave, is even of deeper interest to men than the relics of their own race, for these things tell more directly of the thoughts and creative acts of God. . . .

The statement that different sets of animals and plants have characterized the successive epochs is often understood as indicating a difference of another kind than that which distinguishes animals now living in different parts of the world. This is a mistake. They are so-called representative types all over the globe, united to each other by structural relations and separated by specific differences of the same kind as those that unite and separate animals of different geological periods. Take, for instance, mud-flats or sandy shores in the same latitudes of Europe and America: we find living on each, animals of the same structural character and of the same general appearance, but with certain specific differences, as of color, size, external appendages, etc. They represent each other on the two continents. The American wolves, foxes, bears, rabbits, are not the same as the European, but those of one continent are as true to their respective types as those of the other; under a somewhat different aspect they represent the same groups of animals. In certain latitudes, or under conditions of nearer proximity, these differences may be less marked. It is well known that there is a great monotony of type, not only among animals and plants but in the human races also, throughout the Arctic regions; and some animals characteristic of the high North reappear under such identical forms in the neighborhood of the snow-fields in lofty mountains, that to trace the difference between the ptarmigans, rabbits, and other gnawing animals of the Alps, for instance, and those of the Arctics, is among the most difficult problems of modern science.

And so is it also with the animated world of past ages: in similar deposits of sand, mud, or lime, in adjoining regions of the same geological age, identical remains of animals and plants may be found; while at greater distances, but under similar circumstances, representative species may occur. In very remote regions, however, whether the circumstances be similar or dissimilar, the general aspect of the organic world differs greatly, remoteness in space being thus in some measure an indication of the degree of affinity between different faunæ. In deposits of different geological periods immediately following each other, we sometimes find remains of animals and plants so closely allied to those of earlier or later periods that at first sight the specific differences are hardly discernible. The difficulty of solving these questions, and of appreciating correctly the differences and similarities between such closely allied organisms, explains the antagonistic views of many naturalists respecting the range of existence of animals, during longer or shorter geological periods; and the superficial way in which discussions concerning the transition of species are carried on, is mainly owing to an ignorance of the conditions above alluded to. My own personal observation and experience in these matters have led me to the conviction that every geological period has had its own representatives, and that no single species has been repeated in successive ages.

The laws regulating the geographical distribution of animals, and their combination into distinct zoölogical provinces called faunæ, with definite limits, are very imperfectly understood as yet; but so closely are all things linked together from the beginning till to-day, that I am convinced we shall never find the clew to their meaning till we carry on our investigations in the past and the present simultaneously. The same principle according to which animal and vegetable life is distributed over the surface of the earth now, prevailed in the earliest geological periods. The geological deposits of all times have had their characteristic faunæ under various zones, their zoölogical provinces presenting special combinations of animal and vegetable life over certain regions, and their representative types reproducing in different countries, but under similar latitudes, the same groups with specific differences.

Of course, the nearer we approach the beginning of organic life, the less marked do we find the differences to be; and for a very obvious reason. The inequalities of the earth's surface, her mountain-barriers protecting whole continents from the Arctic winds, her open plains exposing others to the full force of the polar blasts, her snug valleys and her lofty heights, her table-lands and rolling prairies, her river-systems and her dry deserts, her cold ocean-currents pouring down from the high North on some of her shores, while warm ones from tropical seas carry their softer influence to others,—in short, all the contrasts in the external configuration of the globe, with the physical conditions attendant upon them, are naturally accompanied by a corresponding variety in animal and vegetable life.

But in the Silurian age, when there were no elevations higher than the Canadian hills, when water covered the face of the earth with the exception of a few isolated portions lifted above the almost universal ocean, how monotonous must have been the conditions of life! And what should we expect to find on those first shores? If we are walking on a sea-beach to-day, we do not look for animals that haunt the forests or roam over the open plains, or for those that live in sheltered valleys or in inland regions or on mountain-heights. We look for Shells, for Mussels and Barnacles, for Crabs, for Shrimps, for Marine Worms, for Star-Fishes and Sea-Urchins, and we may find here and there a fish stranded on the sand or strangled in the sea-weed. Let us remember, then, that in the Silurian period the world, so far as it was raised above the ocean, was a beach; and let us seek there for such creatures as God has made to live on seashores, and not belittle the Creative work, or say that He first scattered the seeds of life in meagre or stinted measure, because we do not find air-breathing animals when there was no fitting atmosphere to feed their lungs, insects with no terrestrial plants to live upon, reptiles without marshes, birds without trees, cattle without grass,—all things, in short, without the essential conditions for their existence. . . .

I have spoken of the Silurian beach as if there were but one, not only because I wished to limit my sketch, and to attempt at least to give it the vividness of a special locality, but also because a single such shore will give us as good an idea of the characteristic fauna of the time as if we drew our material from a wider range. There are, however, a great number of parallel ridges belonging to the Silurian and Devonian periods, running from east to west, not only through the State of New York, but far beyond, through the States of Michigan and Wisconsin into Minnesota; one may follow nine or ten such successive shores in unbroken lines, from the neighborhood of Lake Champlain to the Far West. They have all the irregularities of modern seashores, running up to form little bays here, and jutting out in promontories there. . . .

Although the early geological periods are more legible in North America, because they are exposed over such extensive tracts of land, yet they have been studied in many other parts of the globe. In Norway, in Germany, in France, in Russia, in Siberia, in Kamchatka, in parts of South America,—in short, wherever the civilization of the white race has extended, Silurian deposits have been observed, and everywhere they bear the same testimony to a profuse and varied creation. The earth was teeming then with life as now; and in whatever corner of its surface the geologist finds the old strata, they hold a dead fauna as numerous as that which lives and moves above it. Nor do we find that there was any gradual increase or decrease of any organic forms at the beginning and close of the successive periods. On the contrary, the opening scenes of every chapter in the world's history have been crowded with life, and its last leaves as full and varied as its first.

VOICES

From ‹Methods of Study in Natural History›

THERE is a chapter in the Natural History of animals that has hardly been touched upon as yet, and that will be especially interesting with reference to families. The voices of animals have a family character not to be mistaken. All the

Canidæ bark and howl!—the fox, the wolf, the dog, have the same kind of utterance, though on a somewhat different pitch. All the bears growl, from the white bear of the Arctic snows to the small black bear of the Andes. All the cats meow, from our quiet fireside companion to the lions and tigers and panthers of the forests and jungle. This last may seem a strange assertion; but to any one who has listened critically to their sounds and analyzed their voices, the roar of the lion is but a gigantic meow, bearing about the same proportion to that of a cat as its stately and majestic form does to the smaller, softer, more peaceful aspect of the cat. Yet notwithstanding the difference in their size, who can look at the lion, whether in his more sleepy mood, as he lies curled up in the corner of his cage, or in his fiercer moments of hunger or of rage, without being reminded of a cat? And this is not merely the resemblance of one carnivorous animal to another; for no one was ever reminded of a dog or wolf by a lion.

Again, all the horses and donkeys neigh; for the bray of a donkey is only a harsher neigh, pitched on a different key, it is true, but a sound of the same character—as the donkey himself is but a clumsy and dwarfish horse. All the cows low, from the buffalo roaming the prairie, the musk-ox of the Arctic ice-fields, or the yak of Asia, to the cattle feeding in our pastures.

Among the birds, this similarity of voice in families is still more marked. We need only recall the harsh and noisy parrots, so similar in their peculiar utterance. Or, take as an example the web-footed family: Do not all the geese and the innumerable host of ducks quack? Does not every member of the crow family caw, whether it be the jackdaw, the jay, or the magpie, the rook in some green rookery of the Old World, or the crow of our woods, with its long, melancholy caw that seems to make the silence and solitude deeper? Compare all the sweet warblers of the songster family—the nightingales, the thrushes, the mocking-birds, the robins; they differ in the greater or less perfection of their note, but the same kind of voice runs through the whole group.

These affinities of the vocal systems among the animals form a subject well worthy of the deepest study, not only as another character by which to classify the animal kingdom correctly, but as bearing indirectly also on the question of the origin of animals. Can we suppose that characteristics like these have been communicated from one animal to another? When we find that all the members of one zoölogical family, however widely scattered over the surface of the earth, inhabiting different continents and even different hemispheres, speak with one voice, must we not believe that they have originated in the places where they now occur, with all their distinctive peculiarities? Who taught the American thrush to sing like his European relative? He surely did not learn it from his cousin over the waters. Those who would have us believe that all animals originated from common centres and single pairs, and have been thence distributed over the world, will find it difficult to explain the tenacity of such characters, and their recurrence and repetition under circumstances that seem to preclude the possibility of any communication, on any other supposition than that of their creation in the different regions where they are now found. We have much yet to learn, from investigations of this kind, with reference not only to families among animals, but to nationalities among men also. . . .

The similarity of motion in families is another subject well worth the consideration of the naturalist: the soaring of the birds of prey,—the heavy flapping of the wings in the gallinaceous birds,—the floating of the swallows, with their short cuts and angular turns,—the hopping of the sparrows,—the deliberate walk of the hens and the strut of the cocks,—the waddle of the ducks and geese,—the slow, heavy creeping of the land-turtle,—the graceful flight of the sea-turtle under the water,—the leaping and swimming of the frog,—the swift run of the lizard, like a flash of green or red light in the sunshine,—the lateral undulation of the serpent,—the dart of the pickerel,—the leap of the trout,—the rush of the hawk-moth through the air,—the fluttering flight of the butterfly,—the quivering poise of the humming-bird,—the arrow-like shooting of the squid through the water,—the slow crawling of the snail on the land,—the sideway movement of the sand-crab,—the backward walk of the crawfish,—the almost imperceptible gliding of the sea-anemone over the rock,—the graceful, rapid motion of the *Pleurobrachia*, with its endless change of curve and spiral. In short, every family of animals has its characteristic action and its peculiar voice; and yet so little is this endless variety of rhythm and cadence both of motion and sound in the organic world understood, that we lack words to express one-half its richness and beauty.

FORMATION OF CORAL REEFS

From ‹Methods of Study in Natural History›

For a long time it was supposed that the reef-builders inhabited very deep waters; for they were sometimes brought up upon sounding-lines from a depth of many hundreds or even thousands of feet, and it was taken for granted that they must have had their home where they were found: but the facts recently ascertained respecting the subsidence of ocean-bottoms have shown that the foundation of a coral-wall may have sunk far below the place where it was laid. And it is now proved, beyond a doubt, that no reef-building coral can thrive at a depth of more than fifteen fathoms, though corals of other kinds occur far lower, and that the dead reef-corals, sometimes brought to the surface from much greater depths, are only broken fragments of some reef that has subsided with the bottom on which it was growing. But though fifteen fathoms is the maximum depth at which any reef-builder can prosper, there are many which will not sustain even that degree of pressure; and this fact has, as we shall see, an important influence on the structure of the reef.

Imagine now a sloping shore on some tropical coast descending gradually below the surface of the sea. Upon that slope, at a depth of from ten to twelve or fifteen fathoms, and two or three or more miles from the mainland, according to the shelving of the shore, we will suppose that one of those little coral animals, to whom a home in such deep waters is congenial, has established itself. How it happens that such a being, which we know is immovably attached to the ground, and forms the foundation of a solid wall, was ever able to swim freely about in the water till it found a suitable resting-place, I shall explain hereafter, when I say something of the mode of reproduction of these animals. Accept, for the moment, my unsustained assertion, and plant our little coral on this sloping shore, some twelve or fifteen fathoms below the surface of the sea.

The internal structure of such a coral corresponds to that of the sea-anemone. The body is divided by vertical partitions from top to bottom, leaving open chambers between; while in the centre hangs the digestive cavity, connected by an opening in the bottom with all these chambers. At the top is an aperture serving as a mouth, surrounded by a wreath of hollow tentacles, each one of which connects at its base with one of the chambers, so that all parts of the animal communicate freely with each other. But though the structure of the coral is identical in all its parts with the sea-anemone, it nevertheless presents one important difference. The body of the sea-anemone is soft, while that of the coral is hard.

It is well known that all animals and plants have the power of appropriating to themselves and assimilating the materials they need, each selecting from the surrounding elements whatever contributes to its well-being. Now, corals possess in an extraordinary degree, the power of assimilating to themselves the lime contained in the salt water around them; and as soon as our little coral is established on a firm foundation, a lime deposit begins to form in all the walls of its body, so that its base, its partitions, and its outer wall, which in the sea-anemone remain always soft, become perfectly solid in the polyp coral, and form a frame as hard as bone.

It may naturally be asked where the lime comes from in the sea which the corals absorb in such quantities. As far as the living corals are concerned the answer is easy, for an immense deal of lime is brought down to the ocean by rivers that wear away the lime deposits through which they pass. The Mississippi, whose course lies through extensive lime regions, brings down yearly lime enough to supply all the animals living in the Gulf of Mexico. But behind this lies a question, not so easily settled, as to the origin of the extensive deposits of limestone found at the very beginning of life upon earth. This problem brings us to the threshold of astronomy; for the base of limestone is metallic in character, susceptible therefore of fusion, and may have formed a part of the materials of our earth, even in an incandescent state, when the worlds were forming. But though this investigation as to the origin of lime does not belong either to the naturalist or the geologist, its suggestion reminds us that the time has come when all the sciences and their results are so intimately connected that no one can be carried on independently of the others. Since the study of the rocks has revealed a crowded life whose records are hoarded within them, the work of the geologist and the naturalist has become one and the same; and at that border-land where the first crust of the earth was condensed out of the igneous mass of materials which formed its earliest condition, their investigation mingles with that of the astronomer, and we cannot trace the limestone in a little coral without going back to the creation of our solar system, when the worlds that compose it were thrown off from a central mass in a gaseous condition.

When the coral has become in this way permeated with lime, all parts of the body are rigid, with the exception of the upper margin, the stomach, and the tentacles. The tentacles are soft and waving, projected or drawn in at will; they retain their flexible character through life, and decompose when the animal dies. For this reason the dried specimens of corals preserved in museums do not give us the least idea of the living corals, in which every one of the millions of beings composing such a community is crowned by a waving wreath of white or green or rose-colored tentacles.

As soon as the little coral is fairly established and solidly attached to the ground, it begins to bud. This may take place in a variety of ways, dividing at the top or budding from the base or from the sides, till the primitive animal is surrounded by a number of individuals like itself, of which it forms the nucleus, and which now begin to bud in their turn, each one surrounding itself with a numerous progeny, all remaining, however, attached to the parent. Such a community increases till its individuals are numbered by millions, and I have myself counted no less than fourteen millions of individuals in a coral mass of Porites measuring not more than twelve feet in diameter. The so-called coral heads, which make the foundation of a coral wall, and seem by their massive character and regular form especially adapted to give a strong, solid base to the whole structure, are known in our classification as the *Astræans*, so named on account of the little [star-shaped] pits crowded upon their surface, each one of which marks the place of a single more or less isolated individual in such a community.

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AGATHIAS

(536–581)

Agathias tells us, in his 'Procemium,' that he was born at Myrina, Asia Minor, that his father's name was Memnonius, and his own profession the law of the Romans and practice in courts of justice. He was born about A. D. 536, and was educated at Alexandria. In Constantinople he studied and practiced his profession, and won his surname of «Scholasticus,» a title then given to a lawyer. He died, it is believed, at the age of forty-four or forty-five. He was a Christian, as he testifies in his epigrams. In the sketch of his life prefixed to his works, Niebuhr collates the friendships he himself mentions, with his fellow-poet Paulus Silentiarius, with Theodorus the decemvir, and Macedonius the ex-consul. To these men he dedicated some of his writings.

Of his works, he says in his 'Procemium' that he wrote in his youth the 'Daphniaca,' a volume of short poems in hexameters, set off with love-tales. His 'Anthology,' or 'Cyclus,' was a collection of poems of early writers, and also compositions of his friend Paulus Silentiarius and others of his time. A number of his epigrams, preserved because they were written before or after his publication of the 'Cyclus,' have come down to us and are contained in the 'Anthologia Græca.' His principal work is his 'Historia,' which is an account of the conquest of Italy by Narses, of the first war between the Greeks and Franks, of the great earthquakes and plagues, of the war between the Greeks and Persians, and the deeds of Belisarius in his contest with the Huns,—of all that was happening in the world Agathias knew between 553 and 558 A. D., while he was a young man. He tells, for instance, of the rebuilding of the great Church of St. Sophia by Justinian, and he adds:—«If any one who happens to live in some place remote from the city wishes to get a clear notion of every part, as though he were there, let him read what Paulus [Silentiarius] has composed in hexameter verse.»

The history of Agathias is valuable as a chronicle. It shows that the writer had little knowledge of geography, and was not enough of a philosopher to look behind events and trace the causes from which they proceeded. He is merely a simple and honest writer, and his history is a business-like entry of facts. He dwells upon himself and his wishes with a minuteness that might seem self-conscious, but is really *naif;* and goes so far in his outspokenness as to say that if for the sake of a livelihood he took up another profession, his taste would have led him to devote himself to the Muses and Graces.

He wrote in the Ionic dialect of his time. The best edition of his 'Historia' is that of Niebuhr (1828). Those of his epigrams preserved in the Greek anthology have not infrequently been turned into English; the happiest translation of all is that of Dryden, in his 'Life of Plutarch.'

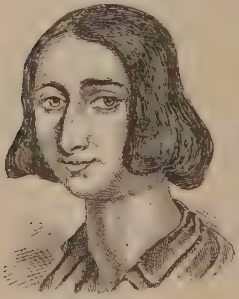
ON PLUTARCH

Cheronean Plutarch, to thy deathless praise
Does martial Rome this grateful statue raise;
Because both Greece and she thy fame have shar'd
(Their heroes written, and their lives compar'd);
But thou thyself could'st never write thy own:
Their lives have parallels, but thine has none.

GRACE AGUILAR

(1816–1847)

Fifty years ago a Jewish writer of English fiction was a new and interesting figure in English literature. Disraeli, indeed, had flashed into the literary world with 'Coningsby,' that eloquent vindication of the Jewish race. His grandiose 'Tancred' had revealed to an astonished public the strange life of the Desert, of the mysterious vastness whence swept forth the tribes who became the Moors of Spain and the Jews of Palestine. Disraeli, however, stood in no category, and established no precedent. But when Miss Aguilar's stories began to appear, they were eagerly welcomed by a public with whom she had already won reputation and favor as the defender and interpreter of her faith.



Grace Aguilar

The youngest child of a rich and refined household, Grace Aguilar was born in 1816 at Hackney, near London, of that historic strain of Spanish-Jewish blood which for generations had produced not only beauty and artistic sensibility, but intellect. Her ancestors were refugees from persecution, and in her burned that ardor of faith which persecution kindles. Fragile and sensitive, she was educated at home, by her cultivated father and mother, under whose solicitous training she developed an alarming precocity. At the age of twelve she had written a heroic drama on her favorite hero, Gustavus Vasa. At fourteen she had published a volume of poems. At twenty-four she accomplished her chief work on the Jewish religion, 'The Spirit of Judaism,' a book republished in America with preface and notes by a well-known rabbi, Dr. Isaac Leeser of Philadelphia. Although the orthodox priest found much in the book to criticize, he was forced to commend its ability. It insists on the importance of the spiritual and moral aspects of the faith delivered to Abraham, and deprecates a superstitious reverence for the mere letter of the law. It presents Judaism as a religion of love, and the Old Testament as the inspiration of the teachings of Jesus. Written more than half a century ago, the book is widely read to-day by students of the Jewish religion.

Four years later Miss Aguilar published 'The Jewish Faith: Its Spiritual Consolation, Moral Guidance, and Immortal Hope,' and 'The Women of Israel,' a series of essays on Biblical history, which was followed by 'Essays and Miscellanies.' So great was the influence of her writings that the Jewesses of London gave her a public testimonial, and addressed her as «the first woman who had stood forth as the public advocate of the faith of Israel.» While on her way to visit a brother then residing at Schwalbach, Germany, she was taken ill at Frankfurt, and died there, at the early age of thirty-one.

The earliest and the best known of Miss Aguilar's novels is 'Home Influence,' which rapidly passed through thirty editions, and is still a favorite book with young girls. There is little incident in the story, which is the history of the development of character in a household of six or seven young persons of very different endowments and tendencies. It was the fashion of the day to be didactic, and Mrs. Hamilton, from whom the «home influence» radiates, seems to the modern reader somewhat inclined to preach, in season and out of season. But the story is interesting, and the characters are distinctly individualized, while at least one episode is dramatically treated.

'The Mother's Recompense' is a sequel to 'Home Influence,' wherein the further fortunes of the Hamilton family are so set forth that the wordly-minded reader is driven to the inference that the brilliant marriages of her children are a sensible part of Mrs. Hamilton's «recompense.» The story is vividly and agreeably told.

Of a different order is 'The Days of Bruce,' a historic romance of the late thirteenth century, which is less historic than romantic, and in whose mirror the rugged chieftain would hardly recognize his angularities.

'The Vale of Cedars' is a historic tale of the persecution of the Jews in Spain under the Inquisition. It is told with intense feeling, with much imagination, and with a strong love of local color. It is said that family traditions are woven into the story. This book, as well as 'Home Influence,' had a wide popularity in a German version.

In reading Grace Aguilar it is not easy to believe her the contemporary of Currer Bell and George Eliot. Both her manner and her method are earlier. Her lengthy and artificial periods, the rounded and decorative sentences that she puts into the mouths of her characters under the extremest pressure of emotion or suffering, the italics, the sentimentalities, are of another age than the sinewy English and hard sense of 'Jane Eyre' or 'Adam Bede.' Doubtless her peculiar, sheltered training, her delicate health, and a luxuriant imagination that had seldom been measured against the realities of life, account for the old-fashioned air of her work. But however antiquated their form may become, the substance of all her tales is sweet and sound, their charm for young girls is abiding, their atmosphere is pure, and the spirit that inspires them is touched only to fine issues.

The citation from 'The Days of Bruce' illustrates her narrative style; that from 'Woman's Friendship' her habit of disquisition; and the passage from 'Home Influence' her rendering of conversation.

THE GREATNESS OF FRIENDSHIP

From 'Woman's Friendship'

It is the fashion to deride woman's influence over woman, to laugh at female friendship, to look with scorn on all those who profess it; but perhaps the world at large little knows the effect of this influence,—how often the unformed character of a young, timid, and gentle girl may be influenced for good or evil by the power of an intimate female friend. There is always to me a doubt of the warmth, the strength, and purity of her feelings, when a young girl merges into womanhood, passing over the threshold of actual life, seeking only the admiration of the other sex; watching, pining, for a husband, or lovers, perhaps, and looking down on all female friendship as romance and folly. No young spirit was ever yet satisfied with the love of nature.

Friendship, or love, gratifies self-love; for it tacitly acknowledges that we must possess some good qualities to attract beyond the mere love of nature. Coleridge justly observes, "that it is well ordered that the amiable and estimable should have a fainter perception of their own qualities than their friends have, otherwise they would love themselves." Now, friendship, or love, permits their doing this unconsciously: mutual affection is a tacit avowal and appreciation of mutual good qualities,—perhaps friendship yet more than love, for the latter is far more an aspiration, a passion, than the former, and influences the permanent character much less. Under the magic of love a girl is generally in a feverish state of excitement, often in a wrong position, deeming herself the goddess, her lover the adorer; whereas it is her will that must bend to his, herself be abnegated for him. Friendship neither permits the former nor demands the latter. It influences silently, often unconsciously; perhaps its power is never known till years afterwards. A girl who stands alone, without acting or feeling friendship, is generally a cold unamiable being, so wrapt in self as to have no room for any person else, except perhaps a lover, whom she only seeks and values as offering his devotion to that same idol, self. Female friendship may be abused, may be but a name for gossip, letter-writing, romance, nay worse, for absolute evil: but that Shakespeare, the mighty wizard of human hearts, thought highly and beautifully of female friendship, we have his exquisite portraits of Rosalind and Celia, Helen and the Countess, undeniably to prove; and if he, who could portray every human passion, every subtle feeling of humanity, from the whelming tempest of love to the fiendish influences of envy and jealousy and hate; from the incomprehensible mystery of Hamlet's wondrous spirit, to the simplicity of the gentle Miranda, the dove-like innocence of Ophelia, who could be crushed by her weight of love, but not reveal it;—if Shakespeare scorned not to picture the sweet influences of female friendship, shall women pass by it as a theme too tame, too idle for their pens?

THE ORDER OF KNIGHTHOOD

From 'The Days of Bruce'

A RIGHT noble and glorious scene did the great hall of the palace present the morning which followed this eventful night. The king, surrounded by his highest prelates and nobles, mingling indiscriminately with the high-born dames and maidens of his court, all splendidly attired, occupied the upper part of the hall, the rest of which was crowded by both his military followers and many of the good citizens of Scone, who flocked in great numbers to behold the august ceremony of the day. Two immense oaken doors at the south side of the hall were flung open, and through them was discerned the large space forming the palace yard, prepared as a tilting-ground, where the new-made knights were to prove their skill. The storm had given place to a soft, breezy morning, the cool freshness of which appeared peculiarly grateful from the oppressiveness of the night; light downy clouds sailed over the blue expanse of heaven, tempering without clouding the brilliant rays of the sun. Every face was clothed with smiles, and the loud shouts which hailed the youthful candidates for knighthood, as they severally entered, told well the feeling with which the patriots of Scotland were regarded.

Some twenty youths received the envied honor at the hand of their sovereign this day; but our limits forbid a minute scrutiny of the bearing of any, however well deserving, save of the two whose vigils have already detained us so long. A yet longer and louder shout proclaimed the appearance of the youngest scion of the house of Bruce and his companion. The daring patriotism of Isabella of Buchan had enshrined her in every heart, and so disposed all men towards her children that the name of their traitorous father was forgotten.

Led by their godfathers, Nigel by his brother-in-law Sir Christopher Seaton, and Alan by the Earl of Lennox, their swords, which had been blessed by the abbot at the altar, slung round their necks, they advanced up the hall. There was a glow on the cheek of the young Alan, in which pride and modesty were mingled; his step at first was unsteady and his lip was seen to quiver from very bashfulness, as he first glanced round the hall and felt that every eye was turned toward him; but when that glance met his mother's fixed on him, and breathing that might of love that filled her heart, all boyish tremors fled, the calm, staid resolve of manhood took the place of the varying glow upon his cheek, the quivering lip became compressed and firm, and his step faltered not again.

The cheek of Nigel Bruce was pale, but there was firmness in the glance of his bright eye, and a smile unclouded in its joyance on his lip. The frivolous lightness of the courtier, the mad bravado of knight-errantry, which was not uncommon to the times, indeed, were not there. It was the quiet courage of the resolved warrior, the calm of a spirit at peace with itself, shedding its own high feeling and poetic glory over all around him.

On reaching the foot of King Robert's throne, both youths knelt and laid their sheathed swords at his feet. Their armor-bearers then approached, and the ceremony of clothing the candidates in steel commenced; the golden spur was fastened on the left foot of each by his respective godfather, while Athol, Hay, and other nobles advanced to do honor to the youths, by aiding in the ceremony. Nor was it warriors alone.

"Is this permitted, lady?" demanded the king, smiling, as the Countess of Buchan approached the martial group, and, aided by Lennox, fastened the polished cuirass on the form of her son. "Is it permitted for a matron to arm a youthful knight? Is there no maiden to do such inspiring office?"

"Yes, when the knight is one like this, my liege," she answered, in the same tone. "Let a matron arm him, good my liege," she added, sadly: "let a mother's hand enwrap his boyish limbs in steel, a mother's blessing mark him thine and Scotland's, that those who watch his bearing in the battle-field may know who sent him there, may thrill his heart with memories of her who stands alone of her ancestral line, that though he bears the name of Comyn, the blood of Fife flows reddest in his veins!"

"Arm him and welcome, noble lady," answered the king, and a buzz of approbation ran through the hall; "and may thy noble spirit and dauntless loyalty inspire him: we shall not need a trusty follower while such as he are around us. Yet, in very deed, my youthful knight must have a lady fair for whom he tilts to-day. Come hither, Isoline, thou lookest verily inclined to envy thy sweet friend her office, and nothing loth to have a loyal knight thyself. Come, come, my pretty one, no blushing now. Lennox, guide those tiny hands aright."

Laughing and blushing, Isoline, the daughter of Lady Campbell, a sister of the Bruce, a graceful child of some thirteen summers, advanced nothing loth, to obey her royal uncle's summons; and an arch smile of real enjoyment irresistibly stole over the countenance of Alan, dispersing the emotion his mother's words produced.

"Nay, tremble not, sweet one," the king continued, in a lower and yet kinder tone, as he turned from the one youth to the other, and observed that Agnes, overpowered by emotion, had scarcely power to perform her part, despite the whispered words of encouraging affection Nigel murmured in her ear. One by one the cuirass and shoulder-pieces, the greaves and gauntlets, the gorget and brassards, the joints of which were so beautifully burnished that they shone as mirrors, and so flexible that every limb had its free use, enveloped those manly forms. Their swords once again girt to their sides, and once more kneeling, the king descended from his throne, alternately dubbing them knight in the name of God, St. Michael, and St. George.

THE CULPRIT AND THE JUDGE

From 'Home Influence'

Mrs. Hamilton was seated at one of the tables on the dais nearest the oriel window, the light from which fell on her, giving her figure — though she was seated naturally enough in one of the large maroon-velvet oaken chairs — an unusual effect of dignity and command, and impressing the terrified beholder with such a sensation of awe that had her life depended on it, she could not for that one minute have gone forward; and even when desired to do so by the words "I desired your presence, Ellen, because I wished to speak to you: come here without any more delay," — how she walked the whole length of that interminable room, and stood facing her aunt, she never knew.

Mrs. Hamilton for a full minute did not speak, but she fixed that searching look, to which we have once before alluded, upon Ellen's face; and then said, in a tone which, though very low and calm, expressed as much as that earnest look: —

"Ellen! is it necessary for me to tell you why you are here — necessary to produce the proof that my words are right, and that you *have* been influenced by the fearful effects of some unconfessed and most heinous sin? Little did I dream its nature."

For a moment Ellen stood as turned to stone, as white and rigid — the next she had sunk down with a wild, bitter cry, at Mrs. Hamilton's feet, and buried her face in her hands.

"Is it true — can it be true — that you, offspring of my own sister; dear to me, cherished by me as my own child — you have been the guilty one to appropriate, and conceal the appropriation of money, which has been a source of distress by its loss, and the suspicion thence proceeding, for the last seven weeks? — that you could listen to your uncle's words, absolving his whole household as incapable of a deed which was actual theft, and yet, by neither word nor sign, betray remorse or guilt? — could behold the innocent suffering, the fearful misery of suspicion, loss of character, without the power of clearing himself, and stand calmly, heedlessly by—only proving by your hardened and rebellious temper that all was not right within—Ellen, can this be true?"

"Yes!" was the reply, but with such a fearful effort that her slight frame shook as with an ague: "thank God that it is known! I dared not bring down the punishment on myself; but I can bear it."

"This is mere mockery, Ellen: how dare I believe even this poor evidence of repentance, with the recollection of your past conduct? What were the notes you found?"

Ellen named them.

"Where are they?—This is but one, and the smallest."

Ellen's answer was scarcely audible.

"Used them—and for what?"

There was no answer; neither then nor when Mrs. Hamilton sternly reiterated the question. She then demanded:—

"How long have they been in your possession?"

"Five or six weeks;" but the reply was so tremulous it carried no conviction with it.

"Since Robert told his story to your uncle, or before?"

"Before."

"Then your last answer was a falsehood, Ellen: it is full seven weeks since my husband addressed the household on the subject. You could not have so miscounted time, with such a deed to date by. Where did you find them?"

Ellen described the spot.

"And what business had you there? You know that neither you nor your cousins are ever allowed to go that way to Mrs. Langford's cottage, and more especially alone. If you wanted to see her, why did you not go the usual way? And when was this?—you must remember the exact day. Your memory is not in general so treacherous."

Again Ellen was silent.

"Have you forgotten it?"

She crouched lower at her aunt's feet, but the answer was audible—"No."

"Then answer me, Ellen, this moment, and distinctly: for what purpose were you seeking Mrs. Langford's cottage by that forbidden path, and when?"

"I wanted money, and I went to ask her to take my trinkets—my watch, if it must be—and dispose of them as I had read of others doing, as miserable as I was; and the wind blew the notes to my very hand, and I used them. I was mad then; I have been mad since, I believe: but I would have returned the whole amount to Robert if I could have but parted with my trinkets in time."

To describe the tone of utter despair, the recklessness as to the effect her words would produce, is impossible. Every word increased Mrs. Hamilton's bewilderment and misery. To suppose that Ellen did not feel was folly. It was the very depth of wretchedness which was crushing her to earth, but every answered and unanswered question but deepened the mystery, and rendered her judge's task more difficult.

"And when was this, Ellen? I will have no more evasion—tell me the exact day."

But she asked in vain. Ellen remained moveless and silent as the dead.

After several minutes Mrs. Hamilton removed her hands from her face, and compelling her to lift up her head, gazed searchingly on her death-like countenance for some moments in utter silence, and then said, in a tone that Ellen never in her life forgot:—

"You cannot imagine, Ellen, that this half confession will either satisfy me, or in the smallest degree redeem your sin. One, and one only path is open to you; for all that you have said and left unsaid but deepens your apparent guilt, and so blackens your conduct, that I can scarcely believe I am addressing the child I so loved—and could still so love, if but one real sign be given of remorse and penitence—one hope of returning truth. But that sign, that hope, can only be a full confession. Terrible as is the guilt of appropriating so large a sum, granted it came by the merest chance into your hand; dark as is the additional sin of concealment when an innocent person was suffering—something still darker, more terrible, must be concealed behind it, or you would not, could not, continue thus obdurately silent. I can believe that under some heavy pressure of misery, some strong excitement, the sum might have been used without thought, and that fear might have prevented the confession of anything so dreadful; but what was this heavy necessity for money, this strong excitement? What fearful and mysterious difficulties have you been led into to call for either? Tell me the truth, Ellen, the whole truth; let me have some hope of saving you and myself the misery of publicly declaring you the guilty one, and so proving Robert's innocence. Tell me what difficulty, what misery so maddened you, as to demand the disposal of your trinkets. If there be the least excuse, the smallest possibility of your obtaining in time forgiveness, I will grant it. I will not believe you so utterly fallen. I will do all I can to remove error, and yet to prevent suffering; but to win this, I must have a full confession — every question that I put to you must be clearly and satisfactorily answered, and so bring back the only comfort to yourself, and hope to me. Will you do this, Ellen?"

"Oh that I could!" was the reply in such bitter anguish, Mrs. Hamilton actually shuddered. "But I cannot — must not — dare not. Aunt Emmeline, hate me; condemn me to the severest, sharpest suffering; I wish for it, pine for it: you cannot loathe me more than I do myself, but do not — do not speak to me in these kind tones — I cannot bear them. It was because I knew what a wretch I am, that I have so shunned you. I was not worthy to be with you; oh, sentence me at once! I dare not answer as you wish."

"Dare not!" repeated Mrs. Hamilton, more and more bewildered; and to conceal the emotion Ellen's wild words and agonized manner had produced, adopting a greater sternness.

"You dare commit a sin, from which the lowest of my household would shrink in horror, and yet tell me you dare not make the only atonement, give me the only proof of real penitence I demand. This is a weak and wicked subterfuge, Ellen, and will not pass with me. There can be no reason for this fearful obduracy, not even the consciousness of greater guilt, for I promise forgiveness, if it be possible, on the sole condition of a full confession. Once more, will you speak? Your hardihood will be utterly useless, for you cannot hope to conquer me; and if you permit me to leave you with your conduct still clothed in this impenetrable mystery, you will compel me to adopt measures to subdue that defying spirit, which will expose you and myself to intense suffering, but which *must* force submission at last."

"You cannot inflict more than I have endured the last seven weeks," murmured Ellen, almost inarticulately. "I have borne that; I can bear the rest."

"Then you will not answer? You are resolved not to tell me the day on which you found that money, the use to which it was applied, the reason of your choosing that forbidden path, permitting me to believe you guilty of heavier sins than may be the case in reality. Listen to me, Ellen; it is more than time this interview should cease; but I will give you one chance more. It is now half-past seven,"—she took the watch from her neck, and laid it on the table—"I will remain here one-half hour longer: by that time this sinful temper may have passed away, and you will consent to give me the confession I demand. I cannot believe you so altered in two months as to choose obduracy and misery, when pardon, and in time confidence and love, are offered in their stead. Get up from that crouching posture; it can be but mock humility, and so only aggravates your sin."

Ellen rose slowly and painfully, and seating herself at the table some distance from her aunt, leaned her arms upon it, and buried her face within them. Never before and never after did half an hour appear so interminable to either Mrs. Hamilton or Ellen. It was well for the firmness of the former, perhaps, that she could not read the heart of that young girl, even if the cause of its anguish had been still concealed. Again and again did the wild longing, turning her actually faint and sick with its agony, come over her to reveal the whole, to ask but rest and mercy for herself, pardon and security for Edward: but then, clear as if held before her in letters of fire, she read every word of her brother's desperate letter, particularly "Breathe it to my uncle or aunt—for if she knows it he will—and you will never see me more." Her mother, pallid as death, seemed to stand before her, freezing confession on her heart and lips, looking at her threateningly, as she had so often seen her, as if the very thought were guilt. The rapidly advancing twilight, the large and lonely room, all added to that fearful illusion; and if Ellen did succeed in praying it was with desperate fervor for strength not to betray her brother. If ever there were a martyr spirit, it was enshrined in that young, frail form. . . .

"Aunt Emmeline, Aunt Emmeline, speak to me but one word—only one word of kindness before you go. I do not ask for mercy—there can be none for such a wretch as I am; I will bear without one complaint, one murmur, all you may inflict—you cannot be too severe. Nothing can be such agony as the utter loss of your affection; I thought, the last two months, that I feared you so much that it was all fear, no love: but now, now that you know my sin, it has all, all come back to make me still more wretched." And before Mrs. Hamilton could prevent, or was in the least aware of her intention, Ellen had obtained possession of one of her hands, and was covering it with kisses, while her whole frame shook with those convulsed, but completely tearless sobs.

"Will you confess, Ellen, if I stay? Will you give me the proof that it *is* such agony to lose my affection, that you *do* love me as you profess, and that it is only one sin which has so changed you? One word, and, tardy as it is, I will listen, and if I can, forgive."

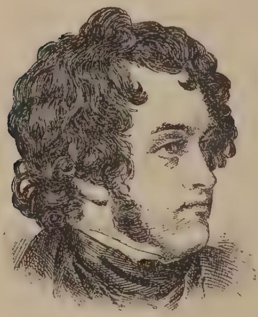
Ellen made no answer, and Mrs. Hamilton's newly raised hopes vanished; she waited full two or three minutes, then gently disengaged her hand and dress from Ellen's still convulsive grasp; the door closed, with a sullen, seemingly unwilling sound, and Ellen was alone. She remained in the same posture, the same spot, till a vague, cold terror so took possession of her, that the room seemed filled with ghostly shapes, and all the articles of furniture suddenly transformed to things of life; and springing up, with the wild, fleet step of fear, she paused not till she found herself in her own room, where, flinging herself on her bed, she buried her face on her pillow, to shut out every object—oh, how she longed to shut out thought!

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH

(1805–1882)

IN THE year 1881, at a commemorative dinner given to her native novelist by the city of Manchester, it was announced that the public library contained two hundred and fifty volumes of his works, which passed through seven thousand six hundred and sixty hands annually, so that his stories were read at the rate of twenty volumes a day throughout the year. This exceptional prophet, who was thus not without honor in his own country, was the son of a prosperous attorney, and was himself destined to the bar. But he detested the law and he loved letters, and before he was twenty he had helped to edit a paper, had written essays, a story, and a play,—none of which, fortunately for him, survive,—and had gone to London, ostensibly to read in a lawyer's office, and really to spin his web of fiction whenever opportunity offered. Chance connected the fortunes of young Ainsworth with periodical literature, where most of his early work appeared. His first important tale was ‘Rookwood,’ published in 1834. This describes the fortunes of a family of Yorkshire gentry in the last century; but its real interest lies in an episode which includes certain experiences of the notorious highwayman, Dick Turpin, and his furious ride to outrun the hue and cry. Sporting England was enraptured with the dash and breathlessness of this adventure, and the novelist's fame was established.

His second romance, ‘Crichton,’ appeared in 1836. The hero of this tale is the brilliant Scottish gentleman whose handsome person, extraordinary scholarship, great accomplishments, courage, eloquence, subtlety, and achievement gained him the sobriquet of «The Admirable.» The chief scenes are laid in Paris at the time of Catherine de' Medici's rule and Henry III.'s reign, when the air was full of intrigue and conspiracy, and when religious quarrels were not more bitter and dangerous than political wrangles. The inscrutable king, the devout Queen Louise of Lorraine, the scheming queen-mother, and Marguerite of Valois, half saint, half profligate, a pearl of beauty and grace; Henry of Navarre, ready to buy his Paris with sword or mass; well-known great nobles, priests, astrologers, learned doctors, foreign potentates, ambassadors, pilgrims, and poisoners,—pass before the reader's eye. The pictures of student life, at a time when all the world swarmed to the great schools of Paris, serve to explain the hero and the period.



W. Harrison Ainsworth

When, in 1839, Dickens resigned the editorship of Bentley's Miscellany, Ainsworth succeeded him. «The new whip,» wrote the old one afterward, «having mounted the box, drove straight to Newgate. He there took in Jack Sheppard, and Cruikshank the artist; and aided by that very vulgar but very wonderful draughtsman, he made an effective story of the burglar's and housebreaker's life.» Everybody read the story, and most persons cried out against so ignoble a hero, so mean a history, and so misdirected a literary energy. The author himself seems not to have been proud of the success which sold thousands of copies of an unworthy book, and placed a dramatic version of its vulgar adventures on the stage of eight theatres at once. He turned his back on this profitable field to produce, in rapid succession, ‹Guy Fawkes,› a tale of the famous Gunpowder Plot; ‹The Tower of London,› a story of the Princess Elizabeth, the reign of Queen Mary, and the melancholy episode of Lady Jane Grey's brief glory; ‹Old Saint Paul,› a story of the time of Charles II., which contains the history of the Plague and of the Great Fire; ‹The Miser's Daughter›; ‹Windsor Castle,› whose chief characters are Katharine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Cardinal Wolsey, and Henry the Eighth; ‹St. James,› a tale of the court of Queen Anne; ‹The Lancashire Witches›; ‹The Star-Chamber,› a historical story of the time of Charles I.; ‹The Constable of the Tower›; ‹The Lord Mayor of London›; ‹Cardinal Pole,› which deals with the court and times of Philip and Mary; ‹John Law,› a story of the great Mississippi Bubble; ‹Tower Hill,› whose heroine is the luckless Catharine Howard; ‹The Spanish Match,› a story of the romantic pilgrimage of Prince Charles and «Steenie» Buckingham to Spain for the fruitless wooing of the Spanish Princess; and at least ten other romances, many of them in three volumes, all appearing between 1840 and 1873. Two of these were published simultaneously, in serial form; and no year passed without its book, to the end of the novelist's long life.

Whatever the twentieth century may say to Ainsworth's historic romances, many of them have found high favor in the past. Concerning ‹Crichton,› so good a critic as «Father Prout» wrote:—«Indeed, I scarcely know any of the so-called historical novels of this frivolous generation which has altogether so graphically reproduced the spirit and character of the time as this daring and dashing portraiture of the young Scot and his contemporaries.» The author of ‹Waverley› praised more than one of the romances, saying that they were written in his own vein. Even Maginn, the satirical, thought that the novelist was doing excellent service to history in making Englishmen understand how full of comedy and tragedy were the old streets and the old buildings of London. And if Ainsworth the writer received some buffetings, Ainsworth the man seems to have been universally loved and approved. All the literary men of his time were his cordial friends. Scott wrote for him ‹The Bonnets of Bonnie Dundee,› and objected to being paid. Dickens was eager to serve him. Talfourd, Barham, Hood, Howitt, James, Jerrold, delighted in his society. At dinner-parties and in country-houses he was a favorite guest. Thus, easy in circumstances, surrounded by affection, happy in the labor of his choice, passed the long life of the upright and kindly English gentleman who spent fifty industrious years in recording the annals of tragedy, wretchedness, and crime.

THE STUDENTS OF PARIS

From ‹Crichton›

TOWARD the close of Wednesday, the 4th of February, 1579, a vast assemblage of scholars was collected before the Gothic gateway of the ancient College of Navarre. So numerous was this concourse, that it not merely blocked up the area in front of the renowned seminary in question, but extended far down the Rue de la Montagne Sainte-Généviève, in which it is situated. Never had such a disorderly rout been brought together since the days of the uproar in 1557, when the predecessors of these turbulent students took up arms, marched in a body to the Pré-aux-Clercs, set fire to three houses in the vicinity, and slew a sergeant of the guard, who vainly endeavored to restrain their fury. Their last election of a rector, Messire Adrien d'Amboise, —*pater eruditionum*, as he is described in his epitaph, when the same body congregated within the cloisters of the Mathurins, and thence proceeded, in tumultuous array, to the church of Saint Louis, in the isle of the same name, — had been nothing to it. Every scholastic hive sent forth its drones. Sorbonne, and Montaigu, Cluny, Harcourt, the Four Nations, and a host of minor establishments — in all, amounting to forty-two — each added its swarms; and a pretty buzzing they created! The fair of Saint-Germain had only commenced the day before; but though its festivities were to continue until Palm Sunday, and though it was the constant resort of the scholars, who committed, during their days of carnival, ten thousand excesses, it was now absolutely deserted.

The Pomme-de-Pin, the Castel, the Magdaleine, and the Mule, those "capital caverns," celebrated in Pantagruel's conference with the Limosin student, which has conferred upon them an immortality like that of our own hostel, the Mermaid, were wholly neglected; the dice-box was laid aside for the nonce; and the well-used cards were thrust into the doublets of these thirsty tipplers of the schools.

But not alone did the crowd consist of the brawler, the gambler, the bully, and the debauchee, though these, it must be confessed, predominated. It was a grand medley of all sects and classes. The modest demeanor of the retiring, pale-browed student was contrasted with the ferocious aspect and reckless bearing of his immediate neighbor, whose appearance was little better than that of a bravo. The grave theologian and embryo ecclesiastic were placed in juxtaposition with the scoffing and licentious acolyte; while the lawyer *in posse*, and the law-breaker *in esse*, were numbered among a group whose pursuits were those of violence and fraud.

Various as were the characters that composed it, not less diversified were the costumes of this heterogeneous assemblage. Subject to no particular regulations as to dress, or rather openly infracting them, if any such were attempted to be enforced—each scholar, to whatever college he belonged, attired himself in such garments as best suited his taste or his finances. Taking it altogether, the mob was neither remarkable for the fashion, nor the cleanliness of the apparel of its members.

From Rabelais we learn that the passion of play was so strongly implanted in the students of his day, that they would frequently stake the points of their doublets at *tric-trac* or *trou-madame;* and but little improvement had taken place in their morals or manners some half-century afterward. The buckle at their girdle—the mantle on their shoulders—the shirt to their back—often stood the hazard of the die; and hence it not unfrequently happened, that a rusty *pourpoint* and ragged *chaussés* were all the covering which the luckless dicers could enumerate, owing, no doubt, « to the extreme rarity and penury of money in their pouches.»

Round or square caps, hoods and cloaks of black, gray, or other sombre hue, were, however, the prevalent garb of the members of the university; but here and there might be seen some gayer specimen of the tribe, whose broad-brimmed, high-crowned felt hat and flaunting feather; whose puffed-out sleeves and exaggerated ruff—with starched plaits of such amplitude that they had been not inappropriately named *plats de Saint Jean-Baptiste*, from the resemblance which the wearer's head bore to that of the saint, when deposited in the charger of the daughter of Herodias—were intended to ape the leading mode of the elegant court of their sovereign, Henri Trois.

To such an extent had these insolent youngsters carried their license of imitation that certain of their members, fresh from the fair of Saint-Germain, and not wholly unacquainted with the hippocras of the sutlers crowding its mart, wore around their throats enormous collars of paper, cut in rivalry of the legitimate plaits of muslin, and bore in their hands long hollow sticks from which they discharged peas and other missiles, in imitation of the *sarbacanes* or pea-shooters then in vogue with the monarch and his favorites.

Thus fantastically tricked out, on that same day — nay, only a few hours before, and at the fair above mentioned — had these facetious wights, with more merriment than discretion, ventured to exhibit themselves before the cortége of Henri, and to exclaim loud enough to reach the ears of royalty, « *à la fraise on connoit le veau!* » a piece of pleasantry for which they subsequently paid dear.

Notwithstanding its shabby appearance in detail, the general effect of this scholastic rabble was striking and picturesque. The thick mustaches and pointed beards with which the lips and chins of most of them were decorated, gave to their physiognomies a manly and determined air, fully borne out by their unrestrained carriage and deportment. To a man, almost all were armed with a tough vine-wood bludgeon, called in their language an *estoc volant*, tipped and shod with steel — a weapon fully understood by them, and rendered, by their dexterity in the use of it, formidable to their adversaries. Not a few carried at their girdles the short rapier, so celebrated in their duels and brawls, or concealed within their bosom a poniard or a two-edged knife.

The scholars of Paris have ever been a turbulent and ungovernable race; and at the period of which this history treats, and indeed long before, were little better than a licensed horde of robbers, consisting of a pack of idle and wayward youths drafted from all parts of Europe, as well as from the remoter provinces of their own nation. There was little in common between the mass of students and their brethren, excepting the fellowship resulting from the universal license in which all indulged. Hence their thousand combats among themselves — combats almost invariably attended with fatal consequences — and which the heads of the university found it impossible to check.

Their own scanty resources, eked out by what little they could derive from beggary or robbery, formed their chief subsistence; for many of them were positive mendicants, and were so denominated: and being possessed of a sanctuary within their own quarters, to which they could at convenience retire, they submitted to the constraint of no laws except those enforced within the jurisdiction of the university, and hesitated at no means of enriching themselves at the expense of their neighbors. Hence the frequent warfare waged between them and the brethren of Saint-Germain des Prés, whose monastic domains adjoined their territories, and whose meadows were the constant battleground of their skirmishes; according to Dulaure — "*presque toujours un théâtre de tumulte, de galanterie, de combats, de duels, de débauches et de sédition.*" Hence their sanguinary conflicts with the good citizens of Paris, to whom they were wholly obnoxious, and who occasionally repaid their aggressions with interest. In 1407 two of their number, convicted of assassination and robbery, were condemned to the gibbet, and the sentence was carried into execution; but so great was the uproar occasioned in the university by this violation of its immunities that the Provost of Paris, Guillaume de Tignonville, was compelled to take down their bodies from Montfaucon and see them honorably and ceremoniously interred. This recognition of their rights only served to make matters worse, and for a series of years the nuisance continued unabated.

It is not our purpose to record all the excesses of the university, nor the means taken for their suppression. Vainly were the civil authorities arrayed against them. Vainly were bulls thundered from the Vatican. No amendment was effected. The weed might be cut down, but was never entirely extirpated. Their feuds were transmitted from generation to generation, and their old bone of contention with the abbot of Saint-Germain (the Pré-aux-Clercs) was, after an uninterrupted strife for thirty years, submitted to the arbitration of the Pope, who very equitably refused to pronounce judgment in favor of either party.

Such were the scholars of Paris in the sixteenth century — such the character of the clamorous crew who besieged the portals of the College of Navarre.

The object that summoned together this unruly multitude was, it appears, a desire on the part of the scholars to be present at a public controversy or learned disputation, then occurring within the great hall of the college before which they were congregated; and the disappointment caused by their finding the gates closed, and all entrance denied to them, occasioned their present disposition to riot.

It was in vain they were assured by the halberdiers stationed at the gates, and who, with crossed pikes, strove to resist the onward pressure of the mob, that the hall and court were already crammed to overflowing, that there was not room even for the sole of a foot of a doctor of the faculties, and that their orders were positive and imperative that none beneath the degree of a bachelor or licentiate should be admitted, and that a troop of martinets and new-comers could have no possible claim to admission.

In vain they were told this was no ordinary disputation, no common controversy, where all were alike entitled to license of ingress; that the disputant was no undistinguished scholar, whose renown did not extend beyond his own trifling sphere, and whose opinions, therefore, few would care to hear and still fewer to oppugn, but a foreigner of high rank, in high favor and fashion, and not more remarkable for his extraordinary intellectual endowments than for his brilliant personal accomplishments.

In vain the trembling officials sought to clinch their arguments by stating, that not alone did the conclave consist of the chief members of the university, the senior doctors of theology, medicine, and law, the professors of the humanities, rhetoric, and philosophy, and all the various other dignitaries; but that the debate was honored by the presence of Monsieur Christophe de Thou, first president of Parliament; by that of the learned Jacques Augustin, of the same name; by one of the secretaries of state and Governor of Paris, M. René de Villequier; by the ambassadors of Elizabeth, Queen of England, and of Philip the Second, King of Spain, and several of their suite; by Abbé de Brantôme; by M. Miron, the court physician; by Cosmo Ruggieri, the Queen Mother's astrologer; by the renowned poets and masque writers, Maîtres Ronsard, Baïf, and Philippe Desportes; by the well-known advocate of Parliament, Messire Étienne Pasquier: but also (and here came the gravamen of the objection to their admission) by the two especial favorites of his Majesty and leaders of affairs, the seigneurs of Joyeuse and D'Epernon.

It was in vain the students were informed that for the preservation of strict decorum, they had been commanded by the rector to make fast the gates. No excuses would avail them. The scholars were cogent reasoners, and a show of staves soon brought their opponents to a nonplus. In this line of argument they were perfectly aware of their ability to prove a major.

"To the wall with them — to the wall!" cried a hundred infuriated voices. "Down with the halberdiers — down with the gates — down with the disputants — down with the rector himself! —

Deny our privileges! To the wall with old Adrien d'Amboise — exclude the disciples of the university from their own halls! — curry favor with the court minions! — hold a public controversy in private! — down with him! We will issue a mandamus for a new election on the spot!"

Whereupon a deep groan resounded throughout the crowd. It was succeeded by a volley of fresh execrations against the rector, and an angry demonstration of bludgeons, accompanied by a brisk shower of peas from the *sarbacanes*.

The officials turned pale, and calculated the chance of a broken neck in reversion, with that of a broken crown in immediate possession. The former being at least contingent, appeared the milder alternative, and they might have been inclined to adopt it had not a further obstacle stood in their way. The gate was barred withinside, and the vergers and bedels who had the custody of the door, though alarmed at the tumult without, positively refused to unfasten it.

Again the threats of the scholars were renewed, and further intimations of violence were exhibited. Again the peas rattled upon the hands and faces of the halberdiers, till their ears tingled with pain. "Prate to us of the king's favorites," cried one of the foremost of the scholars, a youth decorated with a paper collar: "they may rule within the precincts of the Louvre, but not within the walls of the university. *Maugre-bleu!* We hold them cheap enough. We heed not the idle bark of these full-fed court lapdogs. What to us is the bearer of a cup and ball? By the four Evangelists, we will have none of them here! Let the Gascon cadet, D'Epernon, reflect on the fate of Quélus and Maugiron, and let our gay Joyeuse beware of the dog's death of Saint-Mégrin. Place for better men — place for the schools — away with frills and *sarbacanes*."

"What to us is a president of Parliament, or a governor of the city?" shouted another of the same gentry. "We care nothing for their ministration. We recognize them not, save in their own courts. All their authority fell to the ground at the gate of the Rue Saint Jacques, when they entered our dominions. We care for no parties. We are trimmers, and steer a middle course. We hold the Guisards as cheap as the Huguenots, and the brethren of the League weigh as little with us as the followers of Calvin. Our only sovereign is Gregory the Thirteenth, Pontiff of Rome. Away with the Guise and the Béarnaise!"

«Away with Henri of Navarre, if you please,» cried a scholar of Harcourt; «or Henri of Valois, if you list: but by all the saints, not with Henri of Lorraine; he is the fast friend of the true faith. No!—No!—live the Guise—live the Holy Union!»

«Away with Elizabeth of England,» cried a scholar of Cluny: «what doth her representative here? Seeks he a spouse for her among our schools? She will have no great bargain, I own, if she bestows her royal hand upon our Duc d'Anjou.»

«If you value your buff jerkin, I counsel you to say nothing slighting of the Queen of England in my hearing,» returned a bluff, broad-shouldered fellow, raising his bludgeon after a menacing fashion. He was an Englishman belonging to the Four Nations, and had a huge bull-dog at his heels.

«Away with Philip of Spain and his ambassador,» cried a Bernardin.

«By the eyes of my mistress!» cried a Spaniard belonging to the College of Narbonne, with huge mustaches curled half-way up his bronzed and insolent visage, and a slouched hat pulled over his brow. «This may not pass muster. The representative of the King of Spain must be respected even by the Academics of Lutetia. Which of you shall gainsay me?—ha!»

«What business has he here with his suite, on occasions like to the present?» returned the Bernardin. «*Tête-Dieu!* this disputation is one that little concerns the interest of your politic king; and methinks Don Philip, or his representative, has regard for little else than whatsoever advances his own interest. Your ambassador hath, I doubt not, some latent motive for his present attendance in our schools.»

«Perchance,» returned the Spaniard. «We will discuss that point anon.»

«And what doth the pander of the Sybarite within the dusty halls of learning?» ejaculated a scholar of Lemoine. «What doth the jealous-pated slayer of his wife and unborn child within the reach of free-spoken voices, and mayhap of well-directed blades? Methinks it were more prudent to tarry within the bowers of his harem, than to hazard his perfumed person among us.»

«Well said,» rejoined the scholar of Cluny—«down with René de Villequier, though he be Governor of Paris.»

«What title hath the Abbé de Brantôme to a seat among us?» said the scion of Harcourt: «faith, he hath a reputation for wit, and scholarship, and gallantry. But what is that to us? His place might now be filled by worthier men."

"And what, in the devil's name, brings Cosmo Ruggieri hither?" asked the Bernardin. "What doth the wrinkled old dealer in the black art hope to learn from us? We are not given to alchemy, and the occult sciences; we practice no hidden mysteries; we brew no philtres; we compound no slow poisons; we vend no waxen images. What doth he here, I say! 'Tis a scandal in the rector to permit his presence. And what if he came under the safeguard, and by the authority of his mistress, Catherine de' Medicis! Shall we regard her passport? Down with the heathen abbé, his abominations have been endured too long; they smell rank in our nostrils. Think how he ensnared La Mole—think on his numberless victims. Who mixed the infernal potion of Charles the Ninth? Let him answer that. Down with the infidel—the Jew—the sorcerer! The stake were too good for him. Down with Ruggieri, I say."

"Aye, down with the accursed astrologer," echoed the whole crew. "He has done abundant mischief in his time. A day of reckoning has arrived. Hath he cast his own horoscope? Did he foresee his own fate? Ha! ha!"

"And then the poets," cried another member of the Four Nations—"a plague on all three. Would they were elsewhere. In what does this disputation concern them? Pierre Ronsard, being an offshoot of this same College of Navarre, hath indubitably a claim upon our consideration. But he is old, and I marvel that his gout permitted him to hobble so far. Oh, the mercenary old scribbler! His late verses halt like himself, yet he lowereth not the price of his masques. Besides which, he is grown moral, and unsays all his former good things. *Mort Dieu!* your superannuated bards ever recant the indiscretions of their nonage. Clément Marot took to psalm-writing in his old age. As to Baïf, his name will scarce outlast the scenery of his ballets, his plays are out of fashion since the Gelosi arrived. He deserves no place among us. And Philip Desportes owes all his present preferment to the Vicomte de Joyeuse. However, he is not altogether devoid of merit—let him wear his bays, so he trouble us not with his company. Room for the sophisters of Narbonne, I say. To the dogs with poetry!"

"*Morbleu!*" exclaimed another. "What are the sophisters of Narbonne to the decretists of the Sorbonne, who will discuss you a position of Cornelius à Lapide, or a sentence of Peter Lombard, as readily as you would a flask of hippocras, or a slice of botargo. Aye, and cry *transeat* to a thesis of Aristotle, though it be against rule. What sayst thou, Capéte?" continued he, addressing his neighbor, a scholar of Montaigu, whose modest gray capuchin procured him this appellation: "are we the men to be thus scurvily entreated?"

"I see not that your merits are greater than ours," returned he of the capuch, "though our boasting be less. The followers of the lowly John Standoncht are as well able to maintain their tenets in controversy as those of Robert of Sorbon; and I see no reason why entrance should be denied us. The honor of the university is at stake, and all its strength should be mustered to assert it."

"Rightly spoken," returned the Bernardin; "and it were a lasting disgrace to our schools were this arrogant Scot to carry off their laurels when so many who might have been found to lower his crest are allowed no share in their defense. The contest is one that concerns us all alike. We at least can arbitrate in case of need."

"I care not for the honors of the university," rejoined one of the Écossais, or Scotch College, then existing in the Rue des Amandiers, "but I care much for the glory of my countryman, and I would gladly have witnessed the triumph of the disciples of Rutherford and of the classic Buchanan. But if the arbitrament to which you would resort is to be that of voices merely, I am glad the rector in his wisdom has thought fit to keep you without, even though I myself be personally inconvenienced by it."

"Name o' God! what fine talking is this?" retorted the Spaniard. "There is little chance of the triumph you predicate for your countryman. Trust me, we shall have to greet his departure from the debate with many hisses and few cheers; and if we could penetrate through the plates of yon iron door, and gaze into the court it conceals from our view, we should find that the loftiness of his pretensions has been already humbled, and his arguments graveled. *Por la Litania de los Santos!* to think of comparing an obscure student of the pitiful College of Saint Andrew with the erudite doctors of the most erudite university in the world, always excepting those of Valencia and Salamanca. It needs all thy country's assurance to keep the blush of shame from mantling in thy cheeks."

«The seminary you revile,» replied the Scot, haughtily, «has been the nursery of our Scottish kings. Nay, the youthful James Stuart pursued his studies under the same roof, beneath the same wise instruction, and at the self-same time as our noble and gifted James Crichton, whom you have falsely denominated an adventurer, but whose lineage is not less distinguished than his learning. His renown has preceded him hither, and he was not unknown to your doctors when he affixed his programme to these college walls. Hark!» continued the speaker, exultingly, «and listen to yon evidence of his triumph.»

And as he spoke, a loud and continued clapping of hands proceeding from within was distinctly heard above the roar of the students.

«That may be at his defeat,» muttered the Spaniard, between his teeth.

«No such thing,» replied the Scot. «I heard the name of Crichton mingled with the plaudits.»

«And who may be this Phœnix—this Gargantua of intellect—who is to vanquish us all, as Panurge did Thaumast, the Englishman?» asked the Sorbonist of the Scot. «Who is he that is more philosophic than Pythagoras?—ha!»

«Who is more studious than Carneades!» said the Bernardin.

«More versatile than Alcibiades!» said Montaigu.

«More subtle than Averroës!» cried Harcourt.

«More mystical than Plotinus!» said one of the Four Nations.

«More visionary than Artemidorus!» said Cluny.

«More infallible than the Pope!» added Lemoine.

«And who pretends to dispute *de omni scibili*,» shouted the Spaniard.

«*Et quolibet ente!*» added the Sorbonist.

«Mine ears are stunned with your vociferations,» replied the Scot. «You ask me who James Crichton is, and yourselves give the response. You have mockingly said he is a *rara avis;* a prodigy of wit and learning: and you have unintentionally spoken the truth. He is so. But I will tell you that of him of which you are wholly ignorant, or which you have designedly overlooked. His condition is that of a Scottish gentleman of high rank. Like your Spanish grandee, he need not doff his cap to kings. On either side hath he the best of blood in his veins. His mother was a Stuart directly descended from that regal line. His father, who owneth the fair domains of Eliock and Cluny, was Lord Advocate to our bonny and luckless Mary (whom Heaven assoilzie!) and still holds his high office. Methinks the Lairds of Crichton might have been heard of here. Howbeit, they are well known to me, who being an Ogilvy of Balfour, have often heard tell of a certain contract or obligation, whereby — »

« *Basta!* » interrupted the Spaniard, « heed not thine own affairs, worthy Scot. Tell us of this Crichton — ha! »

« I have told you already more than I ought to have told, » replied Ogilvy, sullenly. « And if you lack further information respecting James Crichton's favor at the Louvre, his feats of arms, and the esteem in which he is held by all the dames of honor in attendance upon your Queen Mother, Catherine de' Medicis — and moreover, » he added, with somewhat of sarcasm, « with her fair daughter, Marguerite de Valois — you will do well to address yourself to the king's buffoon, Maître Chicot, whom I see not far off. Few there are, methinks, who could in such short space have won so much favor, or acquired such bright renown. »

« Humph! » muttered the Englishman, « your Scotsmen stick by each other all the world over. This James Crichton may or may not be the hero he is vaunted, but I shall mistrust his praises from that quarter, till I find their truth confirmed. »

« He has, to be sure, acquired the character of a stout swordsman, » said the Bernardin, « to give the poor devil his due. »

« He has not met with his match at the *salle-d'armes*, though he has crossed blades with the first in France, » replied Ogilvy.

« I have seen him at the Manége, » said the Sorbonist, « go through his course of equitation, and being a not altogether unskillful horseman myself, I can report favorably of his performance. »

« There is none among your youth can sit a steed like him, » returned Ogilvy, « nor can any of the jousters carry off the ring with more certainty at the lists. I would fain hold my tongue, but you enforce me to speak in his praise. »

« Body of Bacchus! » exclaimed the Spaniard, half unsheathing the lengthy weapon that hung by his side. « I will hold you a wager of ten rose-nobles to as many silver reals of Spain, that with this stanch Toledo I will overcome your vaunted Crichton in close fight in any manner or practice of fence or digladiation which he may appoint — sword and dagger, or sword only —

stripped to the girdle or armed to the teeth. By our Saint Trinidad! I will have satisfaction for the contumelious affront he hath put upon the very learned gymnasium to which I belong; and it would gladden me to clip the wings of this loud-crowing cock, or any of his dunghill crew," added he, with a scornful gesture at the Scotsman.

"If that be all you seek, you shall not need to go far in your quest," returned Ogilvy. "Tarry till this controversy be ended, and if I match not your Spanish blade with a Scottish broadsword, and approve you as recreant at heart as you are boastful and injurious of speech, may Saint Andrew forever after withhold from me his protection."

"The Devil!" exclaimed the Spaniard. "Thy Scottish saint will little avail thee, since thou hast incurred my indignation. Betake thee, therefore, to thy paternosters, if thou has grace withal to mutter them; for within the hour thou art assuredly food for the kites of the Pré-aux-Clercs—sa-ha!"

"Look to thyself, vile braggart!" rejoined Ogilvy, scornfully: "I promise thee thou shalt need other intercession than thine own to purchase safety at my hands."

"Courage, Master Ogilvy," said the Englishman, "thou wilt do well to slit the ears of this Spanish swashbuckler. I warrant me he hides a craven spirit beneath that slashed *pourpoint*. Thou art in the right, man, to make him eat his words. Be this Crichton what he may, he is at least thy countryman, and in part mine own."

"And as such I will uphold him," said Ogilvy, "against any odds."

"Bravo! my valorous Don Diego Caravaja," said the Sorbonist, slapping the Spaniard on the shoulder, and speaking in his ear. "Shall these scurvy Scots carry all before them?—I warrant me, no. We will make common cause against the whole beggarly nation; and in the meanwhile we intrust thee with this particular quarrel. See thou acquit thyself in it as beseemeth a descendant of the Cid."

"Account him already abased," returned Caravaja. "By Pelayo, I would the other were at his back, that both might be transfixed at a blow—ha!"

"To return to the subject of difference," said the Sorbonist, who was too much delighted with the prospect of a duel to allow the quarrel a chance of subsiding, while it was in his power to fan the flame; «to return to the difference,» said he, aloud, glancing at Ogilvy: «it must be conceded that as a wassailer this Crichton is without a peer. None of us may presume to cope with him in the matter of the flask and the flagon, though we number among us some jolly topers. Friar John, with the Priestess of Bacbuc, was a washy bibber compared with him.»

«He worships at the shrines of other priestesses besides hers of Bacbuc, if I be not wrongly informed,» added Montaigu, who understood the drift of his companion.

«Else, wherefore our rejoinder to his cartels?» returned the Sorbonist. «Do you not call to mind that beneath his arrogant defiance of our learned body, affixed to the walls of the Sorbonne, it was written, ‘That he who would behold this miracle of learning must hie to the tavern or bordel?’ Was it not so, my hidalgo?»

«I have myself seen him at the temulentive tavern of the Falcon,» returned Caravaja, «and at the lupanarian haunts in the Champ Gaillard and the Val-d'Amour. You understand me — ha!»

«Ha! ha! ha!» chorused the scholars. «James Crichton is no stoic. He is a disciple of Epicurus. *Vel in puellam impingit, vel in poculum* — ha! ha!»

«'Tis said that he hath dealings with the Evil One,» observed the man of Harcourt, with a mysterious air; «and that, like Jeanne d'Arc, he hath surrendered his soul for his temporal welfare. Hence his wondrous lore; hence his supernatural beauty and accomplishments; hence his power of fascinating the fair sex; hence his constant run of luck with the dice; hence, also, his invulnerableness to the sword.»

«'Tis said, also, that he has a familiar spirit, who attends him in the semblance of a black dog,» said Montaigu.

«Or in that of a dwarf, like the sooty imp of Cosmo Ruggieri,» said Harcourt. «Is it not so?» he asked, turning to the Scot.

«He lies in his throat who says so,» cried Ogilvy, losing all patience. «To one and all of you I breathe defiance; and there is not a brother in the college to which I belong who will not maintain my quarrel.»

A loud laugh of derision followed this sally; and, ashamed of having justly exposed himself to ridicule by his idle and unworthy display of passion, the Scotsman held his peace and endeavored to turn a deaf ear to their taunts.

The gates of the College of Navarre were suddenly thrown open, and a long-continued thunder of applause bursting from within, announced the conclusion of the debate. That it had terminated in favor of Crichton could no longer be doubted, as his name formed the burden of all the plaudits with which the courts were ringing. All was excitement: there was a general movement. Ogilvy could no longer restrain himself. Pushing forward by prodigious efforts, he secured himself a position at the portal.

The first person who presented himself to his inquiring eyes was a gallant figure in a glittering steel corselet crossed by a silken sash, who bore at his side a long sword with a magnificent handle, and upon his shoulder a lance of some six feet in length, headed with a long scarlet tassel, and brass half-moon pendant. «Is not Crichton victorious?» asked Ogilvy of Captain Larchant, for he it was.

«He hath acquitted himself to admiration,» replied the guardsman, who, contrary to the custom of such gentry (for captains of the guard have been fine gentlemen in all ages), did not appear to be displeased at this appeal to his courtesy, «and the rector hath adjudged him all the honors that can be bestowed by the university.»

«Hurrah for old Scotland,» shouted Ogilvy, throwing his bonnet in the air; «I was sure it would be so; this is a day worth living for. *Hæc olim meminisse juvabit.*»

«Thou at least shalt have reason to remember it,» muttered Caravaja, who, being opposite to him, heard the exclamation — «and he too, perchance,» he added, frowning gloomily, and drawing his cloak over his shoulder.

«If the noble Crichton be compatriot of yours, you are in the right to be proud of him,» replied Captain Larchant, «for the memory of his deeds of this day will live as long as learning shall be held in reverence. Never before hath such a marvelous display of universal erudition been heard within these schools. By my faith, I am absolutely wonder-stricken, and not I alone, but all. In proof of which I need only tell you, that coupling his matchless scholarship with his extraordinary accomplishments, the professors in their address to him at the close of the controversy have bestowed upon him the epithet of 'Admirable'— an appellation by which he will ever after be distinguished.»

«The Admirable Crichton!» echoed Ogilvy—«hear you that!—a title adjudged to him by the whole conclave of the university—hurrah! The Admirable Crichton! 'Tis a name will find an echo in the heart of every true Scot. By Saint Andrew! this is a proud day for us.»

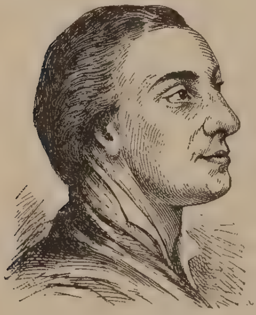
«In the mean time,» said Larchant, smiling at Ogilvy's exultations, and describing a circle with the point of his lance, «I must trouble you to stand back, Messieurs Scholars, and leave free passage for the rector and his train—Archers advance, and make clear the way, and let the companies of the Baron D'Epernon and of the Vicomte de Joyeuse be summoned, as well as the guard of his excellency, Seigneur René de Villequier. Patience, messieurs, you will hear all particulars anon.»

So saying, he retired, and the men-at-arms, less complaisant than their leaders, soon succeeded in forcing back the crowd.

MARK AKENSIDE

(1721–1770)

Mark Akenside is of less importance in genuine poetic rank than in literary history. He was technically a real poet; but he had not a great, a spontaneous, nor a fertile poetical mind. Nevertheless, a writer who gave pleasure to a generation cannot be set aside. The fact that the mid-eighteenth century ranked him among its foremost poets is interesting and still significant. It determines the poetic standard and product of that age; and the fact that, judged thus, Akenside was fairly entitled to his fame.


Mark Akenside

He was the son of a butcher, born November 9th, 1721, in Newcastle-on-Tyne, whence Eldon and Stowell also sprang. He attracted great attention by an early poem, 'The Virtuoso.' The citizens of that commercial town have always appreciated their great men and valued intellectual distinction, and its Dissenters sent him at their own expense to Edinburgh to study for the Presbyterian ministry. A year later he gave up theology for medicine—honorably repaying the money advanced for his divinity studies, if obviously out of some one's else pocket.

After some struggle in provincial towns, his immense literary reputation — for at twenty-four he was a star of the first magnitude in Great Britain — and the generosity of a friend enabled him to acquire a fashionable London practice. He wrote medical treatises which at the time made him a leader in his profession, secured a rich clientage, and prospered greatly. In 1759 he was made physician to Christ's Hospital, where, however valued professionally, he is charged with being brutal and offensive to the poor; with indulging his fastidiousness, temper, and pomposity, and with forgetting that he owed anything to mere duty or humanity.

Unfortunately, too, Akenside availed himself of that mixture of complaisance and arrogance by which almost alone a man of no birth can rise in a society graded by birth. He concealed his origin and was ashamed of his pedigree. But the blame for his flunkeyism belongs, perhaps, less to him than to the insolent caste feeling of society, which forced it on him as a measure of self-defense and of advancement. He wanted money, loved place and selfish comfort, and his nature did not balk at the means of getting them, — including living on a friend when he did not need such help. To become physician to the Queen, he turned his coat from Whig to Tory; but no one familiar with the politics of the time will regard this as an unusual offense. It must also be remembered that Akenside possessed a delicate constitution, keen senses, and irritable nerves; and that he was a parvenu, lacking the power of self-control even among strangers. These traits explain, though they do not excuse, his bad temper to the unclean and disagreeable patients of the hospital, and they mitigate the fact that his industry was paralyzed by material prosperity, and his self-culture interfered with by conceit. His early and sweeping success injured him as many a greater man has been thus injured.

Moreover, his temper was probably soured by secret bitternesses. His health, his nerves, an entire absence of the sense of humor, and his lack of repartee, made him shun like Pope and Horace Walpole the bibulous and gluttonous element of eighteenth-century British society. For its brutal horseplay and uncivil practical joking which passed for wit, Akenside had no tolerance, yet he felt unwilling to go where he would be outshone by inferior men. His strutty arrogance of manner, like excessive prudery in a woman, may have been a fortification to a garrison too weak to fight in the open field. And it must be admitted that, as so often happens, Akenside's outward *ensemble* was eminently what the vulgar world terms « guyable. » He was not a little of a fop. He was plain-featured and yet assuming in manner. He hobbled in walking from lameness of tell-tale origin, — a cleaver falling on his foot in childhood, compelling him to wear an artificial heel — and he was morbidly sensitive over it. His prim formality of manner, his sword and stiff-curled wig, his small and sickly face trying to maintain an expression impressively dignified, made him a ludicrous figure, which his contemporaries never tired of ridiculing and caricaturing. Henderson, the actor, said that «Akenside, when he walked the streets, looked for all the world like one of his own Alexandrines set upright.» Smollett even used him as a model for the pedantic doctor in ‹Peregrine Pickle,› who gives a dinner in the fashion of the ancients, and dresses each dish according to humorous literary recipes.

But there were those who seem to have known an inner and superior personality beneath the brusqueness, conceit, and policy, beyond the nerves and fears; and they valued it greatly, at least on the intellectual side. A wealthy and amiable young Londoner, Jeremiah Dyson, remained a friend so enduring and admiring as to give the poet a house in Bloomsbury Square, with £300 a year and a chariot, and personally to extend his medical practice. We cannot suppose this to be a case of patron and parasite. Other men of judgment showed like esteem. And in congenial society, Akenside was his best and therefore truest self. He was an easy and even brilliant talker, displaying learning and immense memory, taste, and philosophic reflection; and as a volunteer critic he has the unique distinction of a man who had what books he liked given him by the publishers for the sake of his oral comments!

The standard edition of Akenside's poems is that edited by Alexander Dyce (London, 1835). Few of them require notice here. His early effort, ‹The Virtuoso,› was merely an acknowledged and servile imitation of Spenser. The claim made by the poet's biographers that he preceded Thomson in reintroducing the Spenserian stanza is groundless. Pope preceded him, and Thomson renewed its popularity by being the first to use it in a poem of real merit, ‹The Castle of Indolence.› Mr. Gosse calls the ‹Hymn to the Naiads› «beautiful,» — «of transcendent merit,» — «perhaps the most elegant of his productions.» The ‹Epistle to Curio,› however, must be held his best poem,— doubtless because it is the only one which came from his heart; and even its merit is much more in rhetorical energy than in art or beauty. As to its allusion and object, the real and classic Curio of Roman social history was a protégé of Cicero's, a rich young Senator, who began as a champion of liberty and then sold himself to Cæsar to pay his debts. In Akenside's poem, Curio represents William Pulteney, Walpole's antagonist, the hope of that younger generation who hated Walpole's system of parliamentary corruption and official jobbing. This party had looked to Pulteney for a clean and public-spirited administration. Their hero was carried to a brief triumph on the wave of their enthusiasm. But Pulteney disappointed them bitterly: he took a peerage, and sunk into utter and permanent political damnation, with no choice but Walpole's methods and tools, no policy save Walpole's to redeem the withdrawal of so much lofty promise, and no aims but personal advancement. From Akenside's address to him, the famous 'Epistle to Curio,' a citation is made below. Akenside's fame, however, rests on the 'Pleasures of the Imagination.' He began it at seventeen; though in the case of works begun in childhood, it is safer to accept the date of finishing as the year of the real composition. He published it six years later, in 1744, on the advice and with the warm admiration of Pope, a man never wasteful of encomiums on the poetry of his contemporaries. It raised its author to immediate fame. It secures him a place among the accepted English classics still. Yet neither its thought nor its style makes the omission to read it any irreparable loss. It is cultivated rhetoric rather than true poetry. Its chief merit and highest usefulness are that it suggested two far superior poems, Campbell's 'Pleasures of Hope' and Rogers's 'Pleasures of Memory.' It is the relationship to these that really keeps Akenside's alive.

In scope, the poem consists of two thousand lines of blank verse. It is distributed in three books. The first defines the sources, methods, and results of imagination; the second its distinction from philosophy and its enchantment by the passions; the third sets forth the power of imagination to give pleasure, and illustrates its mental operation. The author remodeled the poem in 1757, but it is generally agreed that he injured it. Macaulay says he spoiled it, and another critic delightfully observes that he «stuffed it with intellectual horsehair.»

The year of Akenside's death (1770) gave birth to Wordsworth. The freer and nobler natural school of poetry came to supplant the artificial one, belonging to an epoch of wigs and false calves, and to open toward the far greater one of the romanticism of Scott and Byron.

FROM THE EPISTLE TO CURIO

[With this earlier and finer form of Akenside's address to the unstable Pulteney (see biographical sketch above) must not be confused its later embodiment among his odes; of which it is 'IX: to Curio.' Much of its thought and diction were transferred to the Ode named; but the latter by no means happily compares with the original 'Epistle.' Both versions, however, are of the same year, 1744.]

Thrice has the spring beheld thy faded fame,
And the fourth winter rises on thy shame,
Since I exulting grasped the votive shell,
In sounds of triumph all thy praise to tell;
Blest could my skill through ages make thee shine,
And proud to mix my memory with thine.
But now the cause that waked my song before,
With praise, with triumph, crowns the toil no more.
If to the glorious man whose faithful cares,
Nor quelled by malice, nor relaxed by years,
Had awed Ambition's wild audacious hate,
And dragged at length Corruption to her fate;
If every tongue its large applauses owed,
And well-earned laurels every muse bestowed;
If public Justice urged the high reward,
And Freedom smiled on the devoted bard:
Say then,—to him whose levity or lust
Laid all a people's generous hopes in dust,
Who taught Ambition firmer heights of power
And saved Corruption at her hopeless hour,
Does not each tongue its execrations owe?
Shall not each Muse a wreath of shame bestow?
And public Justice sanctify the award?
And Freedom's hand protect the impartial bard?

. . . .

There are who say they viewed without amaze
The sad reverse of all thy former praise;
That through the pageants of a patriot's name,
They pierced the foulness of thy secret aim;
Or deemed thy arm exalted but to throw
The public thunder on a private foe.
But I, whose soul consented to thy cause,
Who felt thy genius stamp its own applause,
Who saw the spirits of each glorious age
Move in thy bosom, and direct thy rage,—

I scorned the ungenerous gloss of slavish minds,
The owl-eyed race, whom Virtue's lustre blinds.
Spite of the learned in the ways of vice,
And all who prove that each man has his price,
I still believed thy end was just and free;
And yet, even yet believe it — spite of thee.
Even though thy mouth impure has dared disclaim,
Urged by the wretched impotence of shame,
Whatever filial cares thy zeal had paid
To laws infirm, and liberty decayed;
Has begged Ambition to forgive the show;
Has told Corruption thou wert ne'er her foe;
Has boasted in thy country's awful ear,
Her gross delusion when she held thee dear;
How tame she followed thy tempestuous call,
And heard thy pompous tales, and trusted all —
Rise from your sad abodes, ye curst of old
For laws subverted, and for cities sold!
Paint all the noblest trophies of your guilt,
The oaths you perjured, and the blood you spilt;
Yet must you one untempted vileness own,
One dreadful palm reserved for him alone:
With studied arts his country's praise to spurn,
To beg the infamy he did not earn,
To challenge hate when honor was his due,
And plead his crimes where all his virtue knew.

. . . .

When they who, loud for liberty and laws,
In doubtful times had fought their country's cause,
When now of conquest and dominion sure,
They sought alone to hold their fruit secure;
When taught by these, Oppression hid the face,
To leave Corruption stronger in her place,
By silent spells to work the public fate,
And taint the vitals of the passive state,
Till healing Wisdom should avail no more,
And Freedom loath to tread the poisoned shore:
Then, like some guardian god that flies to save
The weary pilgrim from an instant grave,
Whom, sleeping and secure, the guileful snake
Steals near and nearer thro' the peaceful brake,—
Then Curio rose to ward the public woe,
To wake the heedless and incite the slow,

Against Corruption Liberty to arm,
And quell the enchantress by a mightier charm.

. . . .

Lo! the deciding hour at last appears;
The hour of every freeman's hopes and fears!

. . . .

See Freedom mounting her eternal throne,
The sword submitted, and the laws her own!
See! public Power, chastised, beneath her stands,
With eyes intent, and uncorrupted hands!
See private life by wisest arts reclaimed!
See ardent youth to noblest manners framed!
See us acquire whate'er was sought by you,
If Curio, only Curio will be true.

'Twas then — O shame! O trust how ill repaid!
O Latium, oft by faithless sons betrayed! —
'Twas then — What frenzy on thy reason stole?
What spells unsinewed thy determined soul? —
Is this the man in Freedom's cause approved?
The man so great, so honored, so beloved?
This patient slave by tinsel chains allured?
This wretched suitor for a boon abjured?
This Curio, hated and despised by all?
Who fell himself to work his country's fall?

O lost, alike to action and repose!
Unknown, unpitied in the worst of woes!
With all that conscious, undissembled pride,
Sold to the insults of a foe defied!
With all that habit of familiar fame,
Doomed to exhaust the dregs of life in shame!
The sole sad refuge of thy baffled art
To act a stateman's dull, exploded part,
Renounce the praise no longer in thy power,
Display thy virtue, though without a dower,
Contemn the giddy crowd, the vulgar wind,
And shut thy eyes that others may be blind.

. . . .

O long revered, and late resigned to shame!
If this uncourtly page thy notice claim
When the loud cares of business are withdrawn,
Nor well-drest beggars round thy footsteps fawn;

In that still, thoughtful, solitary hour,
When Truth exerts her unresisted power,
Breaks the false optics tinged with fortune's glare,
Unlocks the breast, and lays the passions bare:
Then turn thy eyes on that important scene,
And ask thyself—if all be well within.
Where is the heart-felt worth and weight of soul,
Which labor could not stop, nor fear control?
Where the known dignity, the stamp of awe,
Which, half abashed, the proud and venal saw?
Where the calm triumphs of an honest cause?
Where the delightful taste of just applause?
Where the strong reason, the commanding tongue,
On which the Senate fired or trembling hung!
All vanished, all are sold—and in their room,
Couched in thy bosom's deep, distracted gloom,
See the pale form of barbarous Grandeur dwell,
Like some grim idol in a sorcerer's cell!
To her in chains thy dignity was led;
At her polluted shrine thy honour bled;
With blasted weeds thy awful brow she crowned,
Thy powerful tongue with poisoned philters bound,
That baffled Reason straight indignant flew,
And fair Persuasion from her seat withdrew:
For now no longer Truth supports thy cause;
No longer Glory prompts thee to applause;
No longer Virtue breathing in thy breast,
With all her conscious majesty confest,
Still bright and brighter wakes the almighty flame,
To rouse the feeble, and the willful tame,
And where she sees the catching glimpses roll,
Spreads the strong blaze, and all involves the soul;
But cold restraints thy conscious fancy chill,
And formal passions mock thy struggling will;
Or, if thy Genius e'er forget his chain,
And reach impatient at a nobler strain,
Soon the sad bodings of contemptuous mirth
Shoot through thy breast, and stab the generous birth,
Till, blind with smart, from truth to frenzy tost,
And all the tenor of thy reason lost,
Perhaps thy anguish drains a real tear;
While some with pity, some with laughter hear.

. . . .

Ye mighty foes of liberty and rest,
Give way, do homage to a mightier guest!
Ye daring spirits of the Roman race,
See Curio's toil your proudest claims efface!—
Awed at the name, fierce Appius rising bends,
And hardy Cinna from his throne attends:
«He comes,» they cry, «to whom the fates assigned
With surer arts to work what we designed,
From year to year the stubborn herd to sway,
Mouth all their wrongs, and all their rage obey;
Till owned their guide, and trusted with their power,
He mocked their hopes in one decisive hour;
Then, tired and yielding, led them to the chain,
And quenched the spirit we provoked in vain.»
But thou, Supreme, by whose eternal hands
Fair Liberty's heroic empire stands;
Whose thunders the rebellious deep control,
And quell the triumphs of the traitor's soul,
O turn this dreadful omen far away!
On Freedom's foes their own attempts repay;
Relume her sacred fire so near suppressed,
And fix her shrine in every Roman breast:
Though bold corruption boast around the land,
«Let virtue, if she can, my baits withstand!»
Though bolder now she urge the accursed claim,
Gay with her trophies raised on Curio's shame;
Yet some there are who scorn her impious mirth,
Who know what conscience and a heart are worth.

ASPIRATIONS AFTER THE INFINITE

From ‹Pleasures of the Imagination›

Who that, from Alpine heights, his laboring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey
Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
Thro' mountains, plains, thro' empires black with shade,
And continents of sand, will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a scanty rill
That murmurs at his feet? The high-born soul
Disdains to rest her heaven-aspiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tired of earth
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft
Through fields of air; pursues the flying storm;

Rides on the volleyed lightning through the heavens;
Or, yoked with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars
The blue profound, and, hovering round the sun,
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
Of light; beholds his unrelenting sway
Bend the reluctant planets to absolve
The fated rounds of Time. Thence, far effused,
She darts her swiftness up the long career
Of devious comets; through its burning signs
Exulting measures the perennial wheel
Of Nature, and looks back on all the stars,
Whose blended light, as with a milky zone,
Invests the orient. Now, amazed she views
The empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold
Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode;
And fields of radiance, whose unfading light
Has traveled the profound six thousand years,
Nor yet arrived in sight of mortal things.
Even on the barriers of the world, untired
She meditates the eternal depth below;
Till half-recoiling, down the headlong steep
She plunges; soon o'erwhelmed and swallowed up
In that immense of being. There her hopes
Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth
Of mortal man, the sovereign Maker said,
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Nor in the fading echoes of Renown,
Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,
The soul should find enjoyment: but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through all the ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection close the scene.

ON A SERMON AGAINST GLORY

Come then, tell me, sage divine,
Is it an offense to own
That our bosoms e'er incline
Toward immortal Glory's throne?
For with me nor pomp nor pleasure,
Bourbon's might, Braganza's treasure,

So can Fancy's dream rejoice,
So conciliate Reason's choice,
As one approving word of her impartial voice.

If to spurn at noble praise
Be the passport to thy heaven,
Follow thou those gloomy ways:
No such law to me was given,
Nor, I trust, shall I deplore me
Faring like my friends before me;
Nor an holier place desire
Than Timoleon's arms acquire,
And Tully's curule chair, and Milton's golden lyre.

PEDRO ANTONIO DE ALARCÓN

(1833-1891)

This novelist, poet, and politician was born at Guadix, in Spain, near Granada, March 10th, 1833, and received his early training in the seminary of his native city. His family destined him for the Church; but he was averse to that profession, subsequently studied law and modern languages at the University of Granada, and took pains to cultivate his natural love for literature and poetry. In 1853 he established at Cadiz the literary review Eco del Occidente (Echo of the West). Greatly interested in politics, he joined a democratic club with headquarters at Madrid. During the revolution of 1854 he published El Látigo (The Whip), a pamphlet in which he satirized the government. The spirit of adventure being always strong in him, he joined the African campaign under O'Donnell in 1859.

His next occupation was the editorship of the journals La Epoca and La Politica. Condemned to a brief period of exile as one of the signers of a protest of Unionist deputies, he passed this time in Paris. Shortly after his return he became involved in the revolution of 1868, but without incurring personal disaster. After Alfonso XII. came to the throne in 1875, he was appointed Councilor of State.

It was in the domain of letters, however, and more especially as a novelist, that he won his most enduring laurels. In 1855 he produced 'El Final de Norma' (The End of Norma), which was his first romance of importance. Four years later he began to publish that series of notable novels which brought him fame, both at home and abroad. The list includes 'El Sombrero de Tres Picos' (The Three-

Cornered Hat), a charming *genre* sketch famous for its pungent wit and humor, and its clever portraiture of provincial life in Spain at the beginning of this century; ‹La Alpujarra›; ‹El Escándalo› (The Scandal), a story which at once created a profound sensation because of its ultramontane cast and opposition to prevalent scientific opinion; ‹El Niño de la Bola› (The Child of the Ball), thought by many to be his masterpiece; ‹El Capitán Veneno› (Captain Veneno); ‹Novelas Cortas› (Short Stories), 3 vols.; and ‹La Pródiga› (The Prodigal). Alarcón is also favorably known as poet, dramatic critic, and an incisive and effective writer of general prose.

His other publications comprise:—‹Diario de un Testigo de la Guerra de Africa› (Journal of a Witness of the African War), a work which is said to have netted the publishers a profit of three million pesetas ($600,000); ‹De Madrid à Nápoles› (from Madrid to Naples); ‹Poesias Serias y Humorísticas› (Serious and Humorous Poems); ‹Judicios Literários y Artísticos› (Literary and Artistic Critiques); ‹Viages por España› (Travels through Spain); ‹El Hijo Pródigo› (The Prodigal Son), a drama for children; and ‹Ultimos Escritos› (Last Writings). Alarcón was elected a member of the Spanish Academy December 15th, 1875. Many of his novels have been translated into English and French. He died July 20th, 1891.

A WOMAN VIEWED FROM WITHOUT

From ‹The Three-Cornered Hat›

The last and perhaps the most powerful reason which the quality of the city—clergy as well as laymen, beginning with the bishop and the corregidor—had for visiting the mill so often in the afternoon, was to admire there at leisure one of the most beautiful, graceful, and admirable works that ever left the hands of the Creator: called Seña [Mrs.] Frasquita. Let us begin by assuring you that Seña Frasquita was the lawful spouse of Uncle Luke, and an honest woman; of which fact all the illustrious visitors of the mill were well aware. Indeed, none of them ever seemed to gaze on her with sinful eyes or doubtful purpose. They all admired her, indeed, and sometimes paid her compliments,—the friars as well as the cavaliers, the prebendaries as well as the magistrate,—as a prodigy of beauty, an honor to her Creator, and as a coquettish and mischievous sprite, who innocently enlivened the most melancholy of spirits. «She is a handsome creature,» the most virtuous prelate used to say. «She looks like an ancient Greek statue,» remarked a learned advocate, who was an Academician and corresponding member on history. «She is the very image of Eve,» broke forth the prior of the Franciscans. «She is a fine woman,» exclaimed the colonel of militia. «She is a serpent, a witch, a siren, an imp,» added the corregidor. «But she is a good woman, an angel, a lovely creature, and as innocent as a child four years old,» all agreed in saying on leaving the mill, crammed with grapes or nuts, on their way to their dull and methodical homes.

This four-year-old child, that is to say, Frasquita, was nearly thirty years old, and almost six feet high, strongly built in proportion, and even a little stouter than exactly corresponded to her majestic figure. She looked like a gigantic Niobe, though she never had any children; she seemed like a female Hercules, or like a Roman matron, the sort of whom there are still copies to be seen in the Rioni Trastevere. But the most striking feature was her mobility, her agility, her animation, and the grace of her rather large person.

For resemblance to a statue, to which the Academician compared her, she lacked statuesque repose. She bent her body like a reed, or spun around like a weather-vane, or danced like a top. Her features possessed even greater mobility, and in consequence were even less statuesque. They were lighted up beautifully by five dimples: two on one cheek, one on the other, another very small one near the left side of her roguish lips, and the last—and a very big one—in the cleft of her rounded chin. Add to these charms her sly or roguish glances, her pretty pouts, and the various attitudes of her head, with which she emphasized her talk, and you will have some idea of that face full of vivacity and beauty, and always radiant with health and happiness.

Neither Uncle Luke nor Seña Frasquita was Andalusian by birth: she came from Navarre, and he from Murcia. He went to the city of —— when he was but fifteen years old, as half page, half servant of the bishop, the predecessor of the present incumbent of that diocese. He was brought up for the Church by his patron, who, perhaps on that account, so that he might not lack competent maintenance, bequeathed him the mill in his will. But Uncle Luke, who had received only the lesser orders when the bishop died, cast off his ecclesiastical garb at once and enlisted as a soldier; for he felt more anxious to see the world and to lead a life of adventure than to say mass or grind corn. He went through the campaign of the Western Provinces in

1793, as the orderly of the brave General Ventura Caro; he was present at the siege of the Castle of Piñon, and remained a long time in the Northern Provinces, when he finally quitted the service. In Estella he became acquainted with Seña Frasquita, who was then simply called Frasquita; made love to her, married her, and carried her to Andalusia to take possession of the mill, where they were to live so peaceful and happy during the rest of their pilgrimage through this vale of tears.

When Frasquita was taken from Navarre to that lonely place she had not yet acquired any Andalusian ways, and was very different from the countrywomen in that vicinity. She dressed with greater simplicity, greater freedom, grace, and elegance than they did. She bathed herself oftener; and allowed the sun and air to caress her bare arms and uncovered neck. To a certain extent she wore the style of dress worn by the gentlewomen of that period; like that of the women in Goya's pictures, and somewhat of the fashion worn by Queen Maria Louisa: if not exactly so scant, yet so short that it showed her small feet, and the commencement of her superb limbs; her bodice was low, and round in the neck, according to the style in Madrid, where she spent two months with her Luke on their way from Navarre to Andalusia. She dressed her hair high on the top of her head, displaying thus both the graceful curve of her snowy neck and the shape of her pretty head. She wore earrings in her small ears, and the taper fingers of her rough but clean hands were covered with rings. Lastly, Frasquita's voice was as sweet as a flute, and her laugh was so merry and so silvery it seemed like the ringing of bells on Saturday of Glory or Easter Eve.

HOW THE ORPHAN MANUEL GAINED HIS SOBRIQUET

From ‹The Child of the Ball›

THE unfortunate boy seemed to have turned to ice from the cruel and unexpected blows of fate; he contracted a deathlike pallor, which he never again lost. No one paid any attention to the unhappy child in the first moments of his anguish, or noticed that he neither groaned, sighed, nor wept. When at last they went to him they found him convulsed and rigid, like a petrifaction of grief; although he walked about, heard and saw, and covered his wounded and dying father with kisses. But he shed not a single tear, either during the death agony of that beloved being, when he kissed the cold face after it was dead, or when he saw them carry the body away forever; nor when he left the house in which he had been born, and found himself sheltered by charity in the house of a stranger. Some praised his courage, others criticized his callousness. Mothers pitied him profoundly, instinctively divining the cruel tragedy that was being enacted in the orphan's heart for want of some tender and compassionate being to make him weep by weeping with him.

Nor did Manuel utter a single word from the moment he saw his beloved father brought in dying. He made no answer to the affectionate questions asked him by Don Trinidad after the latter had taken him home; and the sound of his voice was never heard during the first three years which he spent in the holy company of the priest. Everybody thought by this time that he would remain dumb forever, when one day, in the church of which his protector was the priest, the sacristan observed him standing before a beautiful image of the «Child of the Ball,» and heard him saying in melancholy accents:—

«Child Jesus, why do you not speak either?»

Manuel was saved. The drowning boy had raised his head above the engulfing waters of his grief. His life was no longer in danger. So at least it was believed in the parish. . . .

Toward strangers—from whom, whenever they came in contact with him, he always received demonstrations of pity and kindness—the orphan continued to maintain the same glacial reserve as before, rebuffing them with the phrase, stereotyped on his disdainful lips, «Let me alone, now;» having said which, in tones of moving entreaty, he would go on his way, not without awakening superstitious feelings in the minds of the persons whom he thus shunned.

Still less did he lay aside, at this saving crisis, the profound sadness and precocious austerity of his character, or the obstinate persistence with which he clung to certain habits. These were limited, thus far, to accompanying the priest to the church; gathering flowers or aromatic herbs to adorn the image of the «Child of the Ball,» before which he would spend hour after hour, plunged in a species of ecstasy; and climbing the neighboring mountain in search of those herbs and flowers, when, owing to the severity of the heat or cold, they were not to be found in the fields.

This adoration, while in consonance with the religious principles instilled into him from the cradle by his father, greatly exceeded what is usual even in the most devout. It was a fraternal and submissive love, like that which he had entertained for his father; it was a confused mixture of familiarity, protection, and idolatry, very similar to the feeling which the mothers of men of genius entertain for their illustrious sons; it was the respectful and protecting tenderness which the strong warrior bestows on the youthful prince; it was an identification of himself with the image; it was pride; it was elation as for a personal good. It seemed as if this image symbolized for him his tragic fate, his noble origin, his early orphanhood, his poverty. his cares, the injustice of men, his solitary state in the world, and perhaps too some presentiment of his future sufferings.

Probably nothing of all this was clear at the time to the mind of the hapless boy, but something resembling it must have been the tumult of confused thoughts that palpitated in the depths of that childlike, unwavering, absolute, and exclusive devotion. For him there was neither God nor the Virgin, neither saints nor angels; there was only the "Child of the Ball," not with relation to any profound mystery, but in himself, in his present form, with his artistic figure, his dress of gold tissue, his crown of false stones, his blonde head, his charming countenance, and the blue-painted globe which he held in his hand, and which was surmounted by a little silver-gilt cross, in sign of the redemption of the world.

And this was the cause and reason why the acolytes of Santa María de la Cabéza first, all the boys of the town afterward, and finally the more respectable and sedate persons, bestowed on Manuel the extraordinary name of "The Child of the Ball": we know not whether by way of applause of such vehement idolatry, and to commit him, as it were, to the protection of the Christ-Child himself; or as a sarcastic antiphrasis,—seeing that this appellation is sometimes used in the place as a term of comparison for the happiness of the very fortunate; or as a prophecy of the valor for which the son of Venegas was to be one day celebrated, and the terror he was to inspire,—since the most hyperbolical expression that can be employed in that district, to extol the bravery and power of any one, is to say that "he does not fear even the 'Child of the Ball.'"

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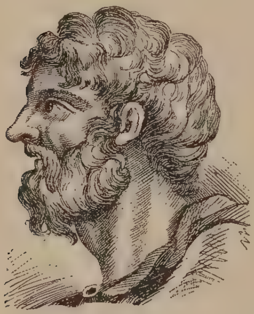
ALCÆUS

(Sixth Century B. C.)

Alcæus, a contemporary of the more famous poet whom he addressed as «violet-crowned, pure, sweetly-smiling Sappho,» was a native of Mitylene in Lesbos. His period of work fell probably between 610 and 580 B. C. At this time his native town was disturbed by an unceasing contention for power between the aristocracy and the people; and Alcæus, through the vehemence of his zeal and his ambition, was among the leaders of the warring faction. By the accidents of birth and education he was an aristocrat, and in politics he was what is now called a High Tory. With his brothers, Cicis and Antimenidas, two influential young nobles as arrogant and haughty as himself, he resented and opposed the slightest concession to democracy. He was a stout soldier, but he threw away his arms at Ligetum when he saw that his side was beaten, and afterward wrote a poem on this performance, apparently not in the least mortified by the recollection. Horace speaks of the matter, and laughingly confesses his own like misadventure.



ALCÆUS

When the kindly Pittacus was chosen dictator, he was compelled to banish the swashbuckling brothers for their abuse of him. But when Alcæus chanced to be taken prisoner, Pittacus set him free, remarking that «forgiveness is better than revenge.» The irreconcilable poet spent his exile in Egypt, and there he may have seen the Greek oligarch who lent his sword to Nebuchadnezzar, and whom he greeted in a poem, a surviving fragment of which is thus paraphrased by John Addington Symonds:—

From the ends of the earth thou art come,
Back to thy home;
The ivory hilt of thy blade
With gold is embossed and inlaid;
Since for Babylon's host a great deed
Thou didst work in their need,
Slaying a warrior, an athlete of might,
Royal, whose height
Lacked of five cubits one span—
A terrible man.

Alcæus is reputed to have been in love with Sappho, the glorious, but only a line or two survives to confirm the tale. Most of his lyrics, like those of his fellow-poets, seem to have been drinking songs, combined, says Symonds, with reflections upon life, and appropriate descriptions of the different seasons. «No time was amiss for drinking, to his mind: the heat of summer, the cold of winter, the blazing dog-star and the driving tempest, twilight with its cheerful gleam of lamps, mid-day with its sunshine — all suggest reasons for indulging in the cup. Not that we are justified in fancying Alcæus a mere vulgar toper: he retained Æolian sumptuousness in his pleasures, and raised the art of drinking to an æsthetic attitude.»

Alcæus composed in the Æolic dialect; for the reason, it is said, that it was more familiar to his hearers. After his death his poems were collected and divided into ten books. Bergk has included the fragments — and one of his compositions has come down to us entire — in his ‹Poetæ Lyrici Græci.›

His love of political strife and military glory led him to the composition of a class of poems which the ancients called ‹Stasiotica› (Songs of Sedition). To this class belong his descriptions of the furnishing of his palace, and many of the fragments preserved to us. Besides those martial poems, he composed hymns to the gods, and love and convivial songs.

His verses are subjective and impassioned. They are outbursts of the poet's own feeling, his own peculiar expression toward the world in which he lived; and it is this quality that gave them their strength and their celebrity. His metres were lively, and the care which he expended upon his strophes has led to the naming of one metre the ‹Alcaic.› Horace testifies (Odes ii. 13, ii. 26, etc.), to the power of his master.

The first selection following is a fragment from his ‹Stasiotica.› It is a description of the splendor of his palace before «the work of war began.»

THE PALACE

FROM roof to roof the spacious palace halls
Glitter with war's array;
With burnished metal clad, the lofty walls
Beam like the bright noonday.
There white-plumed helmets hang from many a nail,
Above, in threatening row;
Steel-garnished tunics and broad coats of mail
Spread o'er the space below.

Chalcidian blades enow, and belts are here,
Greaves and emblazoned shields;
Well-tried protectors from the hostile spear,
On other battlefields.
With these good helps our work of war's begun,
With these our victory must be won.

Translation of Colonel Mure.

A BANQUET SONG

The rain of Zeus descends, and from high heaven
A storm is driven:
And on the running water-brooks the cold
Lays icy hold;
Then up: beat down the winter; make the fire
Blaze high and higher;
Mix wine as sweet as honey of the bee
Abundantly;
Then drink with comfortable wool around
Your temples bound.
We must not yield our hearts to woe, or wear
With wasting care;
For grief will profit us no whit, my friend,
Nor nothing mend;
But this is our best medicine, with wine fraught
To cast out thought.

Translation of J. A. Symonds.

AN INVITATION

Why wait we for the torches' lights?
Now let us drink while day invites.
In mighty flagons hither bring
The deep-red blood of many a vine,
That we may largely quaff, and sing
The praises of the god of wine,
The son of Jove and Semele,
Who gave the jocund grape to be
A sweet oblivion to our woes.
Fill, fill the goblet — one and two:
Let every brimmer, as it flows,
In sportive chase, the last pursue.

Translation of Sir William Jones.

THE STORM

Now here, now there, the wild waves sweep,
Whilst we, betwixt them o'er the deep,
In shatter'd tempest-beaten bark,
With laboring ropes are onward driven,
The billows dashing o'er our dark
Upheavèd deck — in tatters riven
Our sails — whose yawning rents between
The raging sea and sky are seen.

. . . .

Loose from their hold our anchors burst,
And then the third, the fatal wave
Comes rolling onward like the first,
And doubles all our toil to save.

Translation of Sir William Jones.

THE POOR FISHERMAN

The fisher Diotimus had, at sea
And shore, the same abode of poverty —
His trusty boat; — and when his days were spent,
Therein self-rowed to ruthless Dis he went;
For that, which did through life his woes beguile,
Supplied the old man with a funeral pile.

Translation of Sir William Jones.

THE STATE

What constitutes a State?
Not high-raised battlement, or labored mound,
Thick wall or moated gate;
Not cities fair, with spires and turrets crown'd;
No: — Men, high-minded men,
With powers as far above dull brutes endued
In forest, brake or den,
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude: —
Men who their duties know,
But know their rights, and knowing, dare maintain;
Prevent the long-aimed blow,
And crush the tyrant, while they rend the chain.

Translation of Sir William Jones.

POVERTY

THE worst of ills, and hardest to endure,
Past hope, past cure,
Is Penury, who, with her sister-mate
Disorder, soon brings down the loftiest state,
And makes it desolate.
This truth the sage of Sparta told,
Aristodemus old,—
«Wealth makes the man.» On him that's poor,
Proud worth looks down, and honor shuts the door.

Translation of Sir William Jones.

BALTÁZAR DE ALCÁZAR

(1530?–1606)

ALTHOUGH little may be realized now of Alcázar's shadowy personality, there is no doubt that in his own century he was widely read. Born of a very respectable family in Seville, either in 1530 or 1531, he first appears as entering the Spanish navy, and participating in several battles on the war galleys of the Marquis of Santa Cruz. It is known that for about twenty years he was alcalde or mayor at the Molares on the outskirts of Utrera,—an important local functionary, a practical man interested in public affairs.

But, on the whole, his seems to have been a strongly artistic nature; for he was a musician of repute, skillful too at painting, and above all a poet. As master and model in metrical composition he chose Martial, and in his epigrammatic turn he is akin to the great Latin poet. He was fond of experimenting in Latin lyrical forms, and wrote many madrigals and sonnets. They are full of vigorous thought and bright satire, of playful malice and epicurean joy in life, and have always won the admiration of his fellow-poets. As has been said, they show a fine taste, quite in advance of the age. Cervantes, his greater contemporary, acknowledged his power with cordial praise in the Canto de Caliope.

The «witty Andalusian» did not write voluminously. Some of his poems still remain in manuscript only. Of the rest, comprised in one small volume, perhaps the best known are ‹The Jovial Supper,› ‹The Echo,› and the ‹Counsel to a Widow.›

SLEEP

SLEEP is no servant of the will,
It has caprices of its own:
When most pursued,—'tis swiftly gone;
When courted least, it lingers still.
With its vagaries long perplext,
I turned and turned my restless sconce,
Till one bright night, I thought at once
I'd master it; so hear my text!

When sleep will tarry, I begin
My long and my accustomed prayer;
And in a twinkling sleep is there,
Through my bed-curtains peeping in.
When sleep hangs heavy on my eyes,
I think of debts I fain would pay;
And then, as flies night's shade from day,
Sleep from my heavy eyelids flies.

And thus controlled the winged one bends
Ev'n his fantastic will to me;
And, strange, yet true, both I and he
Are friends,—the very best of friends.
We are a happy wedded pair,
And I the lord and she the dame;
Our bed—our board—our hours the same,
And we're united everywhere.

I'll tell you where I learnt to school
This wayward sleep:—a whispered word
From a church-going hag I heard,
And tried it—for I was no fool.
So from that very hour I knew
That having ready prayers to pray,
And having many debts to pay,
Will serve for sleep and waking too.

From Longfellow's ‹Poets of Europe›: by permission of Houghton, Mifflin and Company

THE JOVIAL SUPPER

IN JAEN, where I reside,
Lives Don Lopez de Sosa;
And I will tell thee, Isabel, a thing
The most daring that thou hast heard of him.

This gentleman had
A Portuguese serving man . . .
However, if it appears well to you, Isabel,
Let us first take supper.
We have the table ready laid,
As we have to sup together;
The wine-cups at their stations
Are only wanting to begin the feast.
Let us commence with new, light wine,
And cast upon it benediction;
I consider it a matter of devotion
To sign with cross that which I drink.

. . . . . .

Be it or not a modern invention,
By the living God I do not know;
But most exquisite was
The invention of the tavern.
Because, I arrive thirsty there,
I ask for new-made wine,
They mix it, give it to me, I drink,
I pay for it, and depart contented.
That, Isabel, is praise of itself,
It is not necessary to laud it.
I have only one fault to find with it,
That is—it is finished with too much haste.

. . . . . .

But say, dost thou not adore and prize
The illustrious and rich black pudding?
How the rogue tickles!
It must contain spices.
How it is stuffed with pine nuts!

. . . .

But listen to a subtle hint.
You did not put a lamp there?
How is it that I appear to see two?
But these are foolish questions,
Already know I what it must be:
It is by this black draught
That the number of lamps accumulates.

[The several courses are ended, and the jovial diner resolves to finish his story.]

. . . . . .

And now, Isabel, as we have supped
So well, and with so much enjoyment,

It appears to be but right
To return to the promised tale.
But thou must know, Sister Isabel,
That the Portuguese fell sick . . .
Eleven o'clock strikes, I go to sleep.
Wait for the morrow.

ALCIPHRON

(Second Century A. D.)

BY HARRY THURSTON PECK

In the history of Greek prose fiction the possibilities of the epistolary form were first developed by the Athenian teacher of rhetoric, Alciphron, of whose life and personality nothing is known except that he lived in the second century A. D.,—a contemporary of the great satirical genius Lucian. Of his writings we now possess only a collection of imaginary letters, one hundred and eighteen in number, arranged in three books. Their value depends partly upon the curious and interesting pictures given in them of the life of the post-Alexandrine period, especially of the low life, and partly upon the fact that they are the first successful attempts at character-drawing to be found in the history of Greek prose fiction. They form a connecting link between the novel of pure incident and adventure, and the more fully developed novel which combines incident and adventure with the delineation of character and the study of motive. The use of the epistolary form in fictitious composition did not, to be sure, originate with Alciphron; for we find earlier instances in the imaginary love-letters composed in verse by the Roman poet, Ovid, under the names of famous women of early legend, such as those of Œnone to Paris (which suggested a beautiful poem of Tennyson's), Medea to Jason, and many others. In these one finds keen insight into character, especially feminine character, together with much that is exquisite in fancy and tender in expression. But it is to Alciphron that we owe the adaptation of this form of composition to prose fiction, and its employment in a far wider range of psychological and social observation.

The life whose details are given us by Alciphron is the life of contemporary Athens in the persons of its easy-going population. The writers whose letters we are supposed to read in reading Alciphron are peasants, fishermen, parasites, men-about-town, and courtesans. The language of the letters is neat, pointed, and appropriate to the person who in each case is supposed to be the writer; and the details are managed with considerable art. Alciphron effaces all impression of his own personality, and is lost in the characters who for the time being occupy his pages. One reads the letters as he would read a genuine correspondence. The illusion is perfect, and we feel that we are for the moment in the Athens of the third century before Christ; that we are strolling in its streets, visiting its shops, its courts, and its temples, and that we are getting a whiff of the Ægean, mingled with the less savory odors of the markets and of the wine-shops. We stroll about the city elbowing our way through the throng of boatmen, merchants, and hucksters. Here a barber stands outside his shop and solicits custom; there an old usurer with pimply face sits bending over his accounts in a dingy little office; at the corner of the street a crowd encircles some Cheap Jack who is showing off his juggling tricks at a small three-legged table, making sea-shells vanish out of sight and then taking them from his mouth. Drunken soldiers pass and repass, talking boisterously of their bouts and brawls, of their drills and punishments, and the latest news of their barracks, and forming a striking contrast to the philosopher, who, in coarse robes, moves with supercilious look and an affectation of deep thought, in silence amid the crowd that jostles him. The scene is vivid, striking, realistic.

Many of the letters are from women; and in these, especially, Alciphron reveals the daily life of the Athenians. We see the demimonde at their toilet, with their mirrors, their powders, their enamels and rouge-pots, their brushes and pincers, and all the thousand and one accessories. Acquaintances come in to make a morning call, and we hear their chatter, — Thaïs and Megara and Bacchis, Hermione and Myrrha. They nibble cakes, drink sweet wine, gossip about their respective lovers, hum the latest songs, and enjoy themselves with perfect abandon. Again we see them at their evening rendezvous, at the banquets where philosophers, poets, sophists, painters, artists of every sort, — in fact, the whole Bohemia of Athens, — gather round them. We get hints of all the stages of the revel, from the sparkling wit and the jolly good-fellowship of the early evening, to the sodden disgust that comes with daybreak when the lamps are poisoning the fetid air and the remnants of the feast are stale.

We are not to look upon the letters of Alciphron as embodying a literary unity. He did not attempt to write one single symmetrical epistolary romance; but the individual letters are usually slight sketches of character carelessly gathered together, and deriving their greatest charm from their apparent spontaneity and artlessness.

Many of them are, to be sure, unpleasantly cynical, and depict the baser side of human nature; others, in their realism, are essentially commonplace; but some are very prettily expressed, and show a brighter side to the picture of contemporary life. Those especially which are supposed to pass between Menander, the famous comic poet, and his mistress Glycera, form a pleasing contrast to the greed and cynicism of much that one finds in the first book of the epistles; they are true love-letters, and are untainted by the slightest suggestion of the mercenary spirit or the veiled coarseness that makes so many of the others unpleasant reading. One letter (i. 6) is interesting as containing the first allusion found in literature to the familiar story of Phryne before the judges, which is more fully told in Athenæus.

The imaginary letter was destined to play an important part in the subsequent history of literature. Alciphron was copied by Aristænetus, who lived in the fifth century of our era, and whose letters have been often imitated in modern times, and by Theophylactus, who lived in the seventh century. In modern English fiction the epistolary form has been most successfully employed by Richardson, Fanny Burney, and, in another *genre*, by Wilkie Collins.

The standard editions of Alciphron are those of Seiler (Leipzig, 1856) and of Hercher (Paris, 1873), the latter containing the Greek text with a parallel version in Latin. The letters have not yet been translated into English. The reader may refer to the chapter on Alciphron in the recently published work of Salverte, 'Le Roman dans la Grèce Ancienne' (The Novel in Ancient Greece: Paris, 1893). The following selections are translated by the present writer.

H. T. Peck

FROM A MERCENARY GIRL

PETALA TO SIMALION

Well, if a girl could live on tears, what a wealthy girl I should be; for you are generous enough with *them*, anyhow! Unfortunately, however, that isn't quite enough for me. I need money; I must have jewels, clothes, servants, and all that sort of thing. Nobody has left me a fortune, I should like you to know, or any mining stock; and so I am obliged to depend on the little presents that gentlemen happen to make me. Now that I've known you a year, how much better off am I for it, I should like to ask? My head looks like a fright because I haven't had anything to rig it out with, all that time; and as to clothes, — why, the only dress I've got in the world is in rags that make me ashamed to be seen with my friends: and yet you imagine that I can go on in this way without having any other means of living! Oh, yes, of course, you cry; but you'll stop presently. I'm really surprised at the number of your tears; but really, unless somebody gives me something pretty soon I shall die of starvation. Of course, you pretend you're just crazy for me, and that you can't live without me. Well, then, isn't there any family silver in your house? Hasn't your mother any jewelry that you can get hold of? Hasn't your father any valuables? Other girls are luckier than I am; for I have a mourner rather than a lover. He sends me crowns, and he sends me garlands and roses, as if I were dead and buried before my time, and he says that he cries all night. Now, if you can manage to scrape up something for me, you can come here without having to cry your eyes out; but if you can't, why, keep your tears to yourself, and don't bother me!

From the ‹Epistolæ,› i. 36.

THE PLEASURES OF ATHENS

EUTHYDICUS TO EPIPHANIO

By all the gods and demons, I beg you, dear mother, to leave your rocks and fields in the country, and before you die, discover what beautiful things there are in town. Just think what you are losing,— the Haloan Festival and the Apaturian Festival, and the Great Festival of Bacchus, and especially the Thesmophorian Festival, which is now going on. If you would only hurry up, and get here to-morrow morning before it is daylight, you would be able to take part in the affair with the other Athenian women. Do come, and don't put it off, if you have any regard for my happiness and my brothers'; for it's an awful thing to die without having any knowledge of the city. That's the life of an ox; and one that is altogether unreasonable. Please excuse me, mother, for speaking so freely for your own good. After all, one ought to speak plainly with everybody, and especially with those who are themselves plain speakers.

From the ‹Epistolæ,› iii. 39.

FROM AN ANXIOUS MOTHER

PHYLLIS TO THRASONIDES

If you only would put up with the country and be sensible, and do as the rest of us do, my dear Thrasonides, you would offer ivy and laurel and myrtle and flowers to the gods at the proper time; and to us, your parents, you would give wheat and wine and a milk-pail full of the new goat's-milk. But as things are, you despise the country and farming, and are fond only of the helmet-plumes and the shield, just as if you were an Acarnanian or a Malian soldier. Don't keep on in this way, my son; but come back to us and take up this peaceful life of ours again (for farming is perfectly safe and free from any danger, and doesn't require bands of soldiers and strategy and squadrons), and be the stay of our old age, preferring a safe life to a risky one.

From the ‹Epistolæ,› iii. 16.

FROM A CURIOUS YOUTH

PHILOCOMUS TO THESTYLUS

Since I have never yet been to town, and really don't know at all what the thing is that they call a city, I am awfully anxious to see this strange sight,—men living all in one place,—and to learn about the other points in which a city differs from the country. Consequently, if you have any reason for going to town, do come and take me with you. As a matter of fact, I am sure there are lots of things I ought to know, now that my beard is beginning to sprout; and who is so able to show me the city as yourself, who are all the time going back and forth to the town?

From the ‹Epistolæ,› iii. 31.

FROM A PROFESSIONAL DINER-OUT

CAPNOSPHRANTES TO ARISTOMACHUS

I should like to ask my evil genius, who drew me by lot as his own particular charge, why he is so malignant and so cruel as to keep me in everlasting poverty; for if no one happens to invite me to dinner I have to live on greens, and to eat acorns and to fill my stomach with water from the hydrant. Now, as long as my body was able to put up with this sort of thing, and my time of life was such as made it proper for me to bear it, I could get along with them fairly well; but now that my hair is growing gray, and the only outlook I have is in the direction of old age, what on earth am I going to do? I shall really have to get a rope and hang myself unless my luck changes. However, even if fortune remains as it is, I shan't string myself up before I have at least one square meal; for before very long, the wedding of Charitus and Leocritis, which is going to be a famous affair, will come off, to which there isn't a doubt that I shall be invited,—either to the wedding itself or to the banquet afterward. It's lucky that weddings need the jokes of brisk fellows like myself, and that without us they would be as dull as gatherings of pigs rather than of human beings!

From the ‹Epistolæ,› iii. 49.

UNLUCKY LUCK

CHYTROLICTES TO PATELLOCHARON

PERHAPS you would like to know why I am complaining so, and how I got my head broken, and why I'm going around with my clothes in tatters. The fact is I swept the board at gambling: but I wish I hadn't; for what's the sense in a feeble fellow like me running up against a lot of stout young men? You see, after I scooped in all the money they put up, and they hadn't a cent left, they all jumped on my neck, and some of them punched me, and some of them stoned me, and some of them tore my clothes off my back. All the same, I hung on to the money as hard as I could, because I would rather die than give up anything of theirs I had got hold of; and so I held out bravely for quite a while, not giving in when they struck me, or even when they bent my fingers back. In fact, I was like some Spartan who lets himself be whipped as a test of his endurance: but unfortunately it wasn't at Sparta that I was doing this thing, but at Athens, and with the toughest sort of an Athenian gambling crowd; and so at last, when actually fainting, I had to let the ruffians rob me. They went through my pockets, and after they had taken everything they could find, they skipped. After all, I've come to the conclusion that it's better to live without money than to die with a pocket full of it.

From the ‹Epistolæ,› iii. 54.

ALCMAN

(Seventh Century B. C.)

According to legend, this illustrious Grecian lyric poet was born in Lydia, and taken to Sparta as a slave when very young, but emancipated by his master on the discovery of his poetic genius. He flourished probably between 670 and 630, during the peace following the Second Messenian War. It was that remarkable period in which the Spartans were gathering poets and musicians from the outer world of liberal accomplishment to educate their children; for the Dorians thought it beneath the dignity of a Dorian citizen to practice these things themselves.

His poetic remains indicate a social freedom at this period hardly in keeping with the Spartan rigor alleged to have been practiced without break from the ancient time of Lycurgus; perhaps this communal asceticism was really a later growth, when the camp of militant slave-holders saw their fibre weakening under the art and luxury they had introduced. He boasts of his epicurean appetite; with evident truthfulness, as a considerable number of his extant fragments are descriptions of dishes. He would have echoed Sydney Smith's—

«Fate cannot harm me—I have dined to-day.»

In a poem descriptive of spring, he laments that the season affords but a scanty stock of his favorite viands.

The Alexandrian grammarians put Alcman at the head of the lyric canon; perhaps partly because they thought him the most ancient, but he was certainly much esteemed in classic times. Ælian says his songs were sung at the first performance of the gymnopædia at Sparta in 665 B. C., and often afterward. Much of his poetry was erotic; but he wrote also hymns to the gods, and ethical and philosophic pieces. His ‹Parthenia,› which form a distinct division of his writings, were songs sung at public festivals by, and in honor of, the performing chorus of virgins. The subjects were either religious or erotic. His proverbial wisdom, and the forms of verse which he often chose, are reputed to have been like Pindar's. He said of himself that he sang like the birds,—that is, was self-taught.

He wrote in the broad Spartan dialect with a mixture of the Æolic, and in various metres. One form of hexameter which he invented was called Alcmanic after him. His poems were comprehended in six books. The scanty fragments which have survived are included in Bergk's ‹Poetæ Lyrici Græci› (1878). The longest was found in 1855 by M. Mariette, in a tomb near the second pyramid.

It is a papyrus fragment of three pages, containing a part of his hymn to the Dioscuri, much mutilated and difficult to decipher.

His descriptive passages are believed to have been his best. The best known and most admired of his fragments is his beautiful description of night, which has been often imitated and paraphrased.

NIGHT

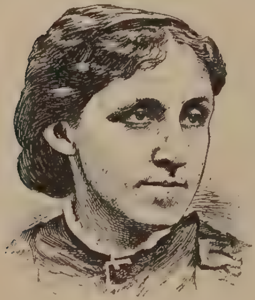
Over the drowsy earth still night prevails;
Calm sleep the mountain tops and shady vales,
The rugged cliffs and hollow glens;
The cattle on the hill. Deep in the sea,
The countless finny race and monster brood
Tranquil repose. Even the busy bee
Forgets her daily toil. The silent wood
No more with noisy hum of insect rings;
And all the feathered tribes, by gentle sleep subdued,
Roost in the glade, and hang their drooping wings.

Translation by Colonel Mure.

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

(1832–1888)

Louisa May Alcott, daughter of Amos Bronson and Abigail (May) Alcott, and the second of the four sisters whom she was afterward to make famous in 'Little Women,' was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania, November 29th, 1832, her father's thirty-third birthday. On his side, she was descended from good Connecticut stock; and on her mother's, from the Mays and Quincys of Massachusetts, and from Judge Samuel Sewall, who has left in his diary as graphic a picture of the New England home-life of two hundred years ago, as his granddaughter of the fifth generation did of that of her own time.


Louisa M. Alcott

At the time of Louisa Alcott's birth her father had charge of a school in Germantown; but within two years he moved to Boston with his family, and put into practice methods of teaching so far in advance of his time that they were unsuccessful. From 1840, the home of the Alcott family was in Concord, Massachusetts, with the exception of a short time spent in a community on a farm in a neighboring town, and the years from 1848 to 1857 in Boston. At seventeen, Lousia's struggle with life began. She wrote a play, contributed sensational stories to weekly papers, tried teaching, sewing, —even going out to service,—and would have become an actress but for an accident. What she wrote of her mother is as true of herself, «She always did what came to her in the way of duty or charity, and let pride, taste, and comfort suffer for love's sake.» Her first book, ‘Flower Fables,’ a collection of fairy tales which she had written at sixteen for the children of Ralph Waldo Emerson, some other little friends, and her younger sisters, was printed in 1855 and was well received. From this time until 1863 she wrote many stories, but few that she afterward thought worthy of being reprinted. Her best work from 1860 to 1863 is in the Atlantic Monthly, indexed under her name; and the most carefully finished of her few poems, ‘Thoreau's Flute,’ appeared in that magazine in September, 1863. After six weeks' experience in the winter of 1862–63 as a hospital nurse in Washington, she wrote for the Commonwealth, a Boston weekly paper, a series of letters which soon appeared in book form as ‘Hospital Sketches.’ Miss Alcott says of them, «The ‘Sketches’ never made much money, but showed me ‘my style.’» In 1864 she published a novel, ‘Moods’; and in 1866, after a year abroad as companion to an invalid, she became editor of Merry's Museum, a magazine for children.

Her ‘Little Women,’ founded on her own family life, was written in 1867–68, in answer to a request from the publishing house of Roberts Brothers for a story for girls, and its success was so great that she soon finished a second part. The two volumes were translated into French, German, and Dutch, and became favorite books in England. While editing Merry's Museum, she had written the first part of ‘The Old-Fashioned Girl’ as a serial for the magazine. After the success of ‘Litle Women,’ she carried the ‘Old-Fashioned Girl’ and her friends forward several years, and ended the story with two happy marriages. In 1870 she went abroad a second time, and from her return the next year until her death in Boston from overwork on March 6th, 1888, the day of her father's funeral, she published twenty volumes, including two novels: one anonymous, ‘A Modern Mephistopheles,’ in the ‘No Name’ series; the other, ‘Work,’ largely a record of her own experience. She rewrote ‘Moods,’ and changed the sad ending of the first version to a more cheerful one; followed the fortunes of her ‘Little Women’ and their children in ‘Little Men’ and ‘Jo's Boys,’ and published ten volumes of short stories, many of them reprinted pieces. She wrote also ‘Eight Cousins,’ its sequel ‘Rose in Bloom,’ ‘Under the Lilacs,’ and ‘Jack and Jill.’

The charm of her books lies in their freshness, naturalness, and sympathy with the feelings and pursuits of boys and girls. She says of herself, «I was born with a boy's spirit under my bib and tucker,» and she never lost it. Her style is often careless, never elegant, for she wrote hurriedly, and never revised or even read over her manuscript; yet her books are full of humor and pathos, and preach the gospel of work and simple, wholesome living. She has been a help and inspiration to many young girls, who have learned from her Jo in ‹Little Women,› or Polly in the ‹Old-Fashioned Girl,› or Christie in ‹Work,› that a woman can support herself and her family without losing caste or self-respect. Her stories of the comradeship of New England boys and girls in school or play have made her a popular author in countries where even brothers and sisters see little of each other. The haste and lack of care in her books are the result of writing under pressure for money to support the family, to whom she gave the best years of her life. As a little girl once said of her in a school essay, «I like all Miss Alcott's books; but what I like best in them is the author herself.»

The reader is referred to ‹Louisa May Alcott: Her Life, Letters, and Journals,› edited by Ednah D. Cheney, published in 1889.

THE NIGHT WARD

From ‹Hospital Sketches›

Being fond of the night side of nature, I was soon promoted to the post of night nurse, with every facility for indulging in my favorite pastime of «owling.» My colleague, a black-eyed widow, relieved me at dawn, we two taking care of the ward between us, like regular nurses, turn and turn about. I usually found my boys in the jolliest state of mind their condition allowed; for it was a known fact that Nurse Periwinkle objected to blue devils, and entertained a belief that he who laughed most was surest of recovery. At the beginning of my reign, dumps and dismals prevailed; the nurses looked anxious and tired, the men gloomy or sad; and a general «Hark-from-the-tombs-a-doleful-sound» style of conversation seemed to be the fashion: a state of things which caused one coming from a merry, social New England town, to feel as if she had got into an exhausted receiver; and the instinct of self-preservation, to say nothing of a philanthropic desire to serve the race, caused a speedy change in Ward No. 1.

More flattering than the most gracefully turned compliment, more grateful than the most admiring glance, was the sight of those rows of faces, all strange to me a little while ago, now lighting up with smiles of welcome as I came among them, enjoying that moment heartily, with a womanly pride in their regard, a motherly affection for them all. The evenings were spent in reading aloud, writing letters, waiting on and amusing the men, going the rounds with Dr. P—— as he made his second daily survey, dressing my dozen wounds afresh, giving last doses, and making them cozy for the long hours to come, till the nine o'clock bell rang, the gas was turned down, the day nurses went off duty, the night watch came on, and my nocturnal adventures began.

My ward was now divided into three rooms; and under favor of the matron, I had managed to sort out the patients in such a way that I had what I called my «duty room,» my «pleasure room,» and my «pathetic room,» and worked for each in a different way. One I visited armed with a dressing-tray full of rollers, plasters, and pins; another, with books, flowers, games, and gossip; a third, with teapots, lullabies, consolation, and sometimes a shroud.

Wherever the sickest or most helpless man chanced to be, there I held my watch, often visiting the other rooms to see that the general watchman of the ward did his duty by the fires and the wounds, the latter needing constant wetting. Not only on this account did I meander, but also to get fresher air than the close rooms afforded; for owing to the stupidity of that mysterious «somebody» who does all the damage in the world, the windows had been carefully nailed down above, and the lower sashes could only be raised in the mildest weather, for the men lay just below. I had suggested a summary smashing of a few panes here and there, when frequent appeals to headquarters had proved unavailing and daily orders to lazy attendants had come to nothing. No one seconded the motion, however, and the nails were far beyond my reach; for though belonging to the sisterhood of «ministering angels,» I had no wings, and might as well have asked for a suspension bridge as a pair of steps in that charitable chaos.

One of the harmless ghosts who bore me company during the haunted hours was Dan, the watchman, whom I regarded with a certain awe; for though so much together, I never fairly saw his face, and but for his legs should never have recognized him, as we seldom met by day. These legs were remarkable, as was his whole figure: for his body was short, rotund, and done up in a big jacket and muffler; his beard hid the lower part of his face, his hat-brim the upper, and all I ever discovered was a pair of sleepy eyes and a very mild voice. But the legs! — very long, very thin, very crooked and feeble, looking like gray sausages in their tight coverings, and finished off with a pair of expansive green cloth shoes, very like Chinese junks with the sails down. This figure, gliding noiselessly about the dimly lighted rooms, was strongly suggestive of the spirit of a beer-barrel mounted on corkscrews, haunting the old hotel in search of its lost mates, emptied and staved in long ago.

Another goblin who frequently appeared to me was the attendant of « the pathetic room,» who, being a faithful soul, was often up to tend two or three men, weak and wandering as babies, after the fever had gone. The amiable creature beguiled the watches of the night by brewing jorums of a fearful beverage which he called coffee, and insisted on sharing with me; coming in with a great bowl of something like mud soup, scalding hot, guiltless of cream, rich in an all-pervading flavor of molasses, scorch, and tin pot.

Even my constitutionals in the chilly halls possessed a certain charm, for the house was never still. Sentinels tramped round it all night long, their muskets glittering in the wintry moonlight as they walked, or stood before the doors straight and silent as figures of stone, causing one to conjure up romantic visions of guarded forts, sudden surprises, and daring deeds; for in these war times the humdrum life of Yankeedom has vanished, and the most prosaic feel some thrill of that excitement which stirs the Nation's heart, and makes its capital a camp of hospitals. Wandering up and down these lower halls I often heard cries from above, steps hurrying to and fro, saw surgeons passing up, or men coming down carrying a stretcher, where lay a long white figure whose face was shrouded, and whose fight was done. Sometimes I stopped to watch the passers in the street, the moonlight shining on the spire opposite, or the gleam of some vessel floating, like a white-winged sea-gull, down the broad Potomac, whose fullest flow can never wash away the red stain of the land.

AMY'S VALLEY OF HUMILIATION

From ‹Little Women›

«THAT boy is a perfect Cyclops, isn't he?» said Amy one day, as Laurie clattered by on horseback, with a flourish of his whip as he passed.

«How dare you say so, when he's got both his eyes? and very handsome ones they are, too,» cried Jo, who resented any slighting remarks about her friend.

«I didn't say anything about his eyes; and I don't see why you need fire up when I admire his riding.»

«Oh, my goodness! that little goose means a centaur, and she called him a Cyclops,» exclaimed Jo, with a burst of laughter.

«You needn't be so rude; it's only a ‹lapse of lingy,› as Mr. Davis says,» retorted Amy, finishing Jo with her Latin. «I just wish I had a little of the money Laurie spends on that horse,» she added, as if to herself, yet hoping her sisters would hear.

«Why?» asked Meg, kindly, for Jo had gone off in another laugh at Amy's second blunder.

«I need it so much: I'm dreadfully in debt, and it won't be my turn to have the rag-money for a month.»

«In debt, Amy: what do you mean?» and Meg looked sober.

«Why, I owe at least a dozen pickled limes; and I can't pay them, you know, till I have money, for Marmee forbids my having anything charged at the shop.»

«Tell me all about it. Are limes the fashion now? It used to be pricking bits of rubber to make balls;» and Meg tried to keep her countenance, Amy looked so grave and important.

«Why, you see, the girls are always buying them, and unless you want to be thought mean, you must do it too. It's nothing but limes now, for every one is sucking them in their desks in school-time, and trading them off for pencils, bead-rings, paper dolls, or something else, at recess. If one girl likes another, she gives her a lime; if she's mad with her, she eats one before her face, and don't offer even a suck. They treat by turns; and I've had ever so many, but haven't returned them, and I ought, for they are debts of honor, you know.»

«How much will pay them off, and restore your credit?» asked Meg, taking out her purse.

«A quarter would more than do it, and leave a few cents over for a treat for you. Don't you like limes?»

"Not much; you may have my share. Here's the money: make it last as long as you can, for it isn't very plenty, you know."

"Oh, thank you! it must be so nice to have pocket-money. I'll have a grand feast, for I haven't tasted a lime this week. I felt delicate about taking any, as I couldn't return them, and I'm actually suffering for one."

Next day Amy was rather late at school; but could not resist the temptation of displaying, with pardonable pride, a moist brown-paper parcel before she consigned it to the inmost recesses of her desk. During the next few minutes the rumor that Amy March had got twenty-four delicious limes (she ate one on the way), and was going to treat, circulated through her "set," and the attentions of her friends became quite overwhelming. Katy Brown invited her to her next party on the spot; Mary Kingsley insisted on lending her her watch till recess; and Jenny Snow, a satirical young lady who had basely twitted Amy upon her limeless state, promptly buried the hatchet, and offered to furnish answers to certain appalling sums. But Amy had not forgotten Miss Snow's cutting remarks about "some persons whose noses were not too flat to smell other people's limes, and stuck-up people who were not too proud to ask for them"; and she instantly crushed "that Snow girl's" hopes by the withering telegram, "You needn't be so polite all of a sudden, for you won't get any."

A distinguished personage happened to visit the school that morning, and Amy's beautifully drawn maps received praise; which honor to her foe rankled in the soul of Miss Snow, and caused Miss March to assume the airs of a studious young peacock. But, alas, alas! pride goes before a fall, and the revengeful Snow turned the tables with disastrous success. No sooner had the guest paid the usual stale compliments, and bowed himself out, than Jenny, under pretence of asking an important question, informed Mr. Davis, the teacher, that Amy March had pickled limes in her desk.

Now, Mr. Davis had declared limes a contraband article, and solemnly vowed to publicly ferule the first person who was found breaking the law. This much-enduring man had succeeded in banishing gum after a long and stormy war, had made a bonfire of the confiscated novels and newspapers, had suppressed a private post-office, had forbidden distortions of the face, nicknames, and caricatures, and done all that one man could do to keep half a hundred rebellious girls in order. Boys are trying enough to human patience, goodness knows! but girls are infinitely more so, especially to nervous gentlemen with tyrannical tempers, and no more talent for teaching than «Dr. Blimber.» Mr. Davis knew any quantity of Greek, Latin, algebra, and ologies of all sorts, so he was called a fine teacher; and manners, morals, feelings, and examples were not considered of any particular importance. It was a most unfortunate moment for denouncing Amy, and Jenny knew it. Mr. Davis had evidently taken his coffee too strong that morning; there was an east wind, which always affected his neuralgia, and his pupils had not done him the credit which he felt he deserved; therefore, to use the expressive if not elegant language of a school-girl, «he was as nervous as a witch, and as cross as a bear.» The word «limes» was like fire to powder: his yellow face flushed, and he rapped on his desk with an energy which made Jenny skip to her seat with unusual rapidity.

«Young ladies, attention, if you please!»

At the stern order the buzz ceased, and fifty pairs of blue, black, gray, and brown eyes were obediently fixed upon his awful countenance.

«Miss March, come to the desk.»

Amy rose to comply with outward composure; but a secret fear oppressed her, for the limes weighed upon her conscience.

«Bring with you the limes you have in your desk,» was the unexpected command which arrested her before she got out of her seat.

«Don't take all,» whispered her neighbor, a young lady of great presence of mind.

Amy hastily shook out half a dozen, and laid the rest down before Mr. Davis, feeling that any man possessing a human heart would relent when that delicious perfume met his nose. Unfortunately, Mr. Davis particularly detested the odor of the fashionable pickle, and disgust added to his wrath.

«Is that all?»

«Not quite,» stammered Amy.

«Bring the rest, immediately.»

With a despairing glance at her set she obeyed.

«You are sure there are no more?»

«I never lie, sir.»

"So I see. Now take these disgusting things, two by two, and throw them out of the window."

There was a simultaneous sigh, which created quite a little gust as the last hope fled, and the treat was ravished from their longing lips. Scarlet with shame and anger, Amy went to and fro twelve mortal times; and as each doomed couple, looking, oh, so plump and juicy! fell from her reluctant hands, a shout from the street completed the anguish of the girls, for it told them that their feast was being exulted over by the little Irish children, who were their sworn foes. This—this was too much; all flashed indignant or appealing glances at the inexorable Davis, and one passionate lime-lover burst into tears.

As Amy returned from her last trip, Mr. Davis gave a portentous "hem," and said, in his most impressive manner:—

"Young ladies, you remember what I said to you a week ago. I am sorry this has happened; but I never allow my rules to be infringed, and I *never* break my word. Miss March, hold out your hand."

Amy started, and put both hands behind her, turning on him an imploring look, which pleaded for her better than the words she could not utter. She was rather a favorite with "old Davis," as of course he was called, and it's my private belief that he *would* have broken his word if the indignation of one irrepressible young lady had not found vent in a hiss. That hiss, faint as it was, irritated the irascible gentleman, and sealed the culprit's fate.

"Your hand, Miss March!" was the only answer her mute appeal received; and, too proud to cry or beseech, Amy set her teeth, threw back her head defiantly, and bore without flinching several tingling blows on her little palm. They were neither many nor heavy, but that made no difference to her. For the first time in her life she had been struck; and the disgrace, in her eyes, was as deep as if he had knocked her down.

"You will now stand on the platform till recess," said Mr. Davis, resolved to do the thing thoroughly, since he had begun.

That was dreadful. It would have been bad enough to go to her seat and see the pitying faces of her friends, or the satisfied ones of her few enemies; but to face the whole school with that shame fresh upon her seemed impossible, and for a second she felt as if she could only drop down where she stood, and break her heart with crying. A bitter sense of wrong, and the thought of Jenny Snow, helped her to bear it; and taking the ignominious place, she fixed her eyes on the stove-funnel above what now seemed a sea of faces, and stood there so motionless and white, that the girls found it very hard to study, with that pathetic little figure before them.

During the fifteen minutes that followed, the proud and sensitive little girl suffered a shame and pain which she never forgot. To others it might seem a ludicrous or trivial affair, but to her it was a hard experience; for during the twelve years of her life she had been governed by love alone, and a blow of that sort had never touched her before. The smart of her hand, and the ache of her heart, were forgotten in the sting of the thought,—"I shall have to tell at home, and they will be so disappointed in me!"

The fifteen minutes seemed an hour; but they came to an end at last, and the word "Recess!" had never seemed so welcome to her before.

"You can go, Miss March," said Mr. Davis, looking, as he felt, uncomfortable.

He did not soon forget the reproachful look Amy gave him, as she went, without a word to any one, straight into the ante-room, snatched her things, and left the place "forever," as she passionately declared to herself. She was in a sad state when she got home; and when the older girls arrived, some time later, an indignation meeting was held at once. Mrs. March did not say much, but looked disturbed, and comforted her afflicted little daughter in her tenderest manner. Meg bathed the insulted hand with glycerine, and tears; Beth felt that even her beloved kittens would fail as a balm for griefs like this, and Jo wrathfully proposed that Mr. Davis be arrested without delay; while Hannah shook her fist at the "villain," and pounded potatoes for dinner as if she had him under her pestle.

No notice was taken of Amy's flight, except by her mates; but the sharp-eyed demoiselles discovered that Mr. Davis was quite benignant in the afternoon, and also unusually nervous. Just before school closed Jo appeared, wearing a grim expression as she stalked up to the desk and delivered a letter from her mother; then collected Amy's property and departed, carefully scraping the mud from her boots on the door-mat, as if she shook the dust of the place off her feet.

"Yes, you can have a vacation from school, but I want you to study a little every day with Beth," said Mrs. March that evening. "I don't approve of corporal punishment, especially for girls. I dislike Mr. Davis's manner of teaching, and don't think the girls you associate with are doing you any good, so I shall ask your father's advice before I send you anywhere else."

"That's good! I wish all the girls would leave, and spoil his old school. It's perfectly maddening to think of those lovely limes," sighed Amy with the air of a martyr.

"I am not sorry you lost them, for you broke the rules, and deserved some punishment for disobedience," was the severe reply, which rather disappointed the young lady, who expected nothing but sympathy.

"Do you mean you are glad I was disgraced before the whole school?" cried Amy.

"I should not have chosen that way of mending a fault," replied her mother; "but I'm not sure that it won't do you more good than a milder method. You are getting to be altogether too conceited and important, my dear, and it is about time you set about correcting it. You have a good many little gifts and virtues, but there is no need of parading them, for conceit spoils the finest genius. There is not much danger that real talent or goodness will be overlooked long; even if it is, the consciousness of possessing and using it well should satisfy one, and the great charm of all power is modesty."

"So it is," cried Laurie, who was playing chess in a corner with Jo. "I knew a girl once who had a really remarkable talent for music, and she didn't know it; never guessed what sweet little things she composed when she was alone, and wouldn't have believed it if any one had told her."

"I wish I'd known that nice girl; maybe she would have helped me, I'm so stupid," said Beth, who stood beside him listening eagerly.

"You do know her, and she helps you better than any one else could," answered Laurie, looking at her with such mischievous meaning in his merry eyes, that Beth suddenly turned very red, and hid her face in the sofa-cushion, quite overcome by such an unexpected discovery.

Jo let Laurie win the game, to pay for that praise of her Beth, who could not be prevailed upon to play for them after her compliment. So Laurie did his best and sung delightfully, being in a particularly lively humor, for to the Marches he seldom showed the moody side of his character. When he was gone, Amy, who had been pensive all the evening, said suddenly, as if busy over some new idea:—

"Is Laurie an accomplished boy?"

"Yes; he has had an excellent education, and has much talent; he will make a fine man, if not spoilt by petting," replied her mother.

"And he isn't conceited, is he?" asked Amy.

"Not in the least; that is why he is so charming, and we all like him so much."

"I see: it's nice to have accomplishments, and be elegant, but not to show off, or get perked up," said Amy thoughtfully.

"These things are always seen and felt in a person's manner and conversation, if modestly used; but it is not necessary to display them," said Mrs. March.

"Any more than it's proper to wear all your bonnets, and gowns and ribbons, at once, that folks may know you've got 'em," added Jo; and the lecture ended in a laugh.

THOREAU'S FLUTE

From the Atlantic Monthly, September, 1863

We, sighing, said, "Our Pan is dead;
His pipe hangs mute beside the river;
Around it wistful sunbeams quiver,
But Music's airy voice is fled.
Spring mourns as for untimely frost;
The bluebird chants a requiem;
The willow-blossom waits for him;—
The Genius of the wood is lost."

Then from the flute, untouched by hands,
There came a low, harmonious breath:
"For such as he there is no death;
His life the eternal life commands;
Above man's aims his nature rose:
The wisdom of a just content
Made one small spot a continent,
And turned to poetry Life's prose.

"Haunting the hills, the stream, the wild,
Swallow and aster, lake and pine,
To him grew human or divine,—
Fit mates for this large-hearted child.

Such homage Nature ne'er forgets,
And yearly on the coverlid
'Neath which her darling lieth hid
Will write his name in violets.

«To him no vain regrets belong,
Whose soul, that finer instrument,
Gave to the world no poor lament,
But wood-notes ever sweet and strong.
O lonely friend! he still will be
A potent presence, though unseen,—
Steadfast, sagacious, and serene:
Seek not for him,—he is with thee.»

A SONG FROM THE SUDS

From ‹Little Women›

Queen of my tub, I merrily sing,
While the white foam rises high;
And sturdily wash, and rinse, and wring,
And fasten the clothes to dry;
Then out in the free fresh air they swing,
Under the sunny sky.

I wish we could wash from our hearts and souls
The stains of the week away,
And let water and air by their magic make
Ourselves as pure as they;
Then on the earth there would be indeed
A glorious washing-day!

Along the path of a useful life,
Will heart's-ease ever bloom;
The busy mind has no time to think
Of sorrow, or care, or gloom;
And anxious thoughts may be swept away,
As we busily wield a broom.

I am glad a task to me is given,
To labor at day by day;
For it brings me health, and strength, and hope,
And I cheerfully learn to say,—
«Head you may think, Heart you may feel,
But Hand you shall work alway!»

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ALCUIN

(735?–804)

BY WILLIAM H. CARPENTER

ALCUIN, usually called Alcuin of York, came of a patrician family of Northumberland. Neither the date nor the place of his birth is known with definiteness, but he was born about 735 at or near York. As a child he entered the cathedral school recently founded by Egbert, Archbishop of York, and ultimately became its most eminent pupil. He was subsequently assistant master to Ælbert, its head; and when Ælbert succeeded to the archbishopric, on the death of Egbert in 766, Alcuin became *scholasticus* or master of the school. On the death of Ælbert in 780, Alcuin was placed in charge of the cathedral library, the most famous in Western Europe. In his longest poem, 'Versus de Eboracensi Ecclesia' (Poem on the Saints of the Church at York), he has left an important record of his connection with York. This poem, written before he left England, is, like most of his verse, in dactylic hexameters. To a certain extent it follows Virgil as a model, and is partly based on the writings of Bede, partly on his own personal experience. It is not only valuable for its historical bearings, but for its disclosure of the manner and matter of instruction in the schools of the time, and the contents of the great library. As master of the cathedral school, Alcuin acquired name and fame at home and abroad, and was soon the most celebrated teacher in Britain. Before 766, in company with Ælbert, he made his first journey to Germany, and may have visited Rome. Earlier than 780 he was again abroad, and at Pavia came under the notice of Charlemagne, who was on his way back from Italy. In 781 Eanbald, the new Archbishop of York, sent Alcuin to Rome to bring back the Archbishop's pallium. At Parma he again met Charlemagne, who invited him to take up his abode at the Frankish court. With the consent of his king and his archbishop he resigned his position at York, and with a few pupils departed for the court at Aachen, in 782.

Alcuin's arrival in Germany was the beginning of a new intellectual epoch among the Franks. Learning was at this time in a deplorable state. The older monastic and cathedral schools had been broken up, and the monasteries themselves often unworthily bestowed upon royal favorites. There had been a palace school for rudimentary instruction, but it was wholly inefficient and unimportant.

During the years immediately following his arrival, Alcuin zealously labored at his projects of educational reform. First reorganizing the palace school, he afterward undertook a reform of the monasteries and their system of instruction, and the establishment of new schools throughout the kingdom of Charlemagne. At the court school the great king himself, as well as Liutgard the queen, became his pupil. Gisela, Abbess of Chelles, the sister of Charlemagne, came also to him for instruction, as did the Princes Charles, Pepin, and Louis, and the Princesses Rotrud and Gisela. On himself and the others, in accordance with the fashion of the time, Alcuin bestowed fanciful names. He was Flaccus or Albinus, Charlemagne was David, the queen was Ava, and Pepin was Julius. The subjects of instruction in this school, the centre of culture of the kingdom, were first of all, grammar; then arithmetic, astronomy, rhetoric, and dialectic. The king himself studied poetry, astronomy, arithmetic, the writings of the Fathers, and theology proper. It was under the influence of Alcuin that Charlemagne issued in 787 the capitulary that has been called «the first general charter of education for the Middle Ages.» It reproves the abbots for their illiteracy, and exhorts them to the study of letters; and although its effect was less than its purpose, it served, with subsequent decrees of the king, to stimulate learning and literature throughout all Germany.

Alcuin's system included, besides the palace school, and the monastic and cathedral schools, which in some instances gave both elementary and superior instruction, all the parish or village elementary schools, whose head was the parish priest.

In 790, seeing his plans well established, Alcuin returned to York bearing letters of reconciliation to Offa, King of Mercia, between whom and Charlemagne dissension had arisen. Having accomplished his errand, he went back to the German court in 792. Here his first act was to take a vigorous part in the furious controversy respecting the doctrine of Adoptionism. Alcuin not only wrote against the heresy, but brought about its condemnation by the Council of Frankfort, in 794.

Two years later, at his own request, he was made Abbot of the Benedictine monastery of St. Martin, at Tours. Not contented with reforming the lax monastic life, he resolved to make Tours a seat of learning. Under his management, it presently became the most renowned school in the kingdom. Especially in the copying of manuscripts did the brethren excel. Alcuin kept up a vast correspondence with Britain as well as with different parts of the Frankish kingdom; and of the two hundred and thirty letters preserved, the greater part belonged to this time. In 799, at Aachen, he held a public disputation on Adoptionism with Felix, Bishop of Urgel, who was wholly vanquished. When the king, in 800, was preparing for that visit to the Papal court which was to end with his coronation as

Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, he invited Alcuin to accompany him. But the old man, wearied with many burdens, could not make the journey. By the beginning of 804 he had become much enfeebled. It was his desire, often expressed, to die on the day of Pentecost. His wish was fulfilled, for he died at dawn on the 19th of May. He was buried in the Cloister Church of St. Martin, near the monastery.

Alcuin's literary activity was exerted in various directions. Two-thirds of all that he wrote was theological in character. These works are exegetical, like the ‹Commentary on the Gospel of St. John›; dogmatic, like the ‹Writings against Felix of Urgel and Elipandus of Toledo,› his best work of this class; or liturgical and moral, like the ‹Lives of the Saints.› The other third is made up of the epistles, already mentioned; of poems on a great variety of subjects, the principal one being the ‹Poem on the Saints of the Church at York›; and of those didactic works which form his principal claim to attention at the present day. His educational treatises are the following: ‹On Grammar,› ‹On Orthography,› ‹On Rhetoric and the Virtues,› ‹On Dialectics,› ‹Disputation between the Royal and Most Noble Youth Pepin, and Albinus the Scholastic,› and ‹On the Calculation of Easter.› The most important of all these writings is his ‹Grammar,› which consists of two parts: the first a dialogue between a teacher and his pupils on philosophy and studies in general; the other a dialogue between a teacher, a young Frank, and a young Saxon, on grammar. These latter, in Alcuin's language, have «but lately rushed upon the thorny thickets of grammatical density.» Grammar begins with the consideration of the letters, the vowels and consonants, the former of which «are, as it were, the souls, and the consonants the bodies of words.» Grammar itself is defined to be «the science of written sounds, the guardian of correct speaking and writing. It is founded on nature, reason, authority, and custom.» He enumerates no less than twenty-six parts of grammar, which he then defines. Many of his definitions and particularly his etymologies, are remarkable. He tells us that feet in poetry are so called «because the metres walk on them»; *littera* is derived from *legitera*, «since the *littera* serve to prepare the way for readers» (*legere*, *iter*). In his ‹Orthography,› a pendant to the ‹Grammar,› *cœlebs*, a bachelor, is «one who is on his way *ad cœlum*» (to heaven). Alcuin's ‹Grammar› is based principally on Donatus. In this, as in all his works, he compiles and adapts, but is only rarely original. ‹On Rhetoric and the Virtues› is a dialogue between Charlemagne and Albinus (Alcuin). The ‹Disputation between Pepin and Albinus,› the beginning of which is here given, shows both the manner and the subject-matter of his instruction. Alcuin, with all the limitations which his environment imposed upon him, stamped himself indelibly upon his day and generation, and left behind him, in his scholars, an enduring influence. Men like Rabanus, the famous Bishop of Mayence, gloried in having been his pupils, and down to the wars and devastations of the tenth century his influence upon education was paramount throughout all Western Europe. There is an excellent account of Alcuin in Professor West's ‹Alcuin› (‹Great Educators› Series), published in 1893.

Wm H Carpenter.

ON THE SAINTS OF THE CHURCH AT YORK

THERE the Eboric scholars felt the rule
Of Master Ælbert, teaching in the school.
Their thirsty hearts to gladden well he knew
With doctrine's stream and learning's heavenly dew.

To some he made the grammar understood,
And poured on others rhetoric's copious flood.
The rules of jurisprudence these rehearse,
While those recite in high Eonian verse,
Or play Castalia's flutes in cadence sweet
And mount Parnassus on swift lyric feet.

Anon the master turns their gaze on high
To view the travailing sun and moon, the sky
In order turning with its planets seven,
And starry hosts that keep the law of heaven.

The storms at sea, the earthquake's shock, the race
Of men and beasts and flying fowl they trace;
Or to the laws of numbers bend their mind,
And search till Easter's annual day they find.

Then, last and best, he opened up to view
The depths of Holy Scripture, Old and New.
Was any youth in studies well approved,
Then him the master cherished, taught, and loved;
And thus the double knowledge he conferred
Of liberal studies and the Holy Word.

From West's ‹Alcuin, and the Rise of the Christian Schools›: by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons

DISPUTATION BETWEEN PEPIN, THE MOST NOBLE AND ROYAL YOUTH, AND ALBINUS THE SCHOLASTIC

PEPIN—What is writing?

Albinus—The treasury of history.

Pepin—What is language?

Albinus—The herald of the soul.

Pepin—What generates language?

Albinus—The tongue.

Pepin—What is the tongue?

Albinus—A whip of the air.

Pepin—What is the air?

Albinus—A maintainer of life.

Pepin—What is life?

Albinus—The joy of the happy; the torment of the suffering; a waiting for death.

Pepin—What is death?

Albinus—An inevitable ending; a journey into uncertainty; a source of tears for the living; the probation of wills; a waylayer of men.

Pepin—What is man?

Albinus—A booty of death; a passing traveler; a stranger on earth.

Pepin—What is man like?

Albinus—The fruit of a tree.

Pepin—What are the heavens?

Albinus—A rolling ball; an immeasurable vault.

Pepin—What is light?

Albinus—The sight of all things.

Pepin—What is day?

Albinus—The admonisher to labor.

Pepin—What is the sun?

Albinus—The glory and splendor of the heavens; the attractive in nature; the measure of hours; the adornment of day.

Pepin—What is the moon?

Albinus—The eye of night; the dispenser of dew; the presager of storms.

Pepin—What are the stars?

Albinus—A picture on the vault of heaven; the steersmen of ships; the ornament of night.

Pepin—What is rain?

Albinus—The fertilizer of the earth; the producer of crops.

Pepin—What is fog?

Albinus—Night in day; the annoyance of eyes.

Pepin—What is wind?

Albinus—The mover of air; the agitation of water; the dryer of the earth.

Pepin—What is the earth?

Albinus—The mother of growth; the nourisher of the living; the storehouse of life; the effacer of all.

Pepin—What is the sea?

Albinus—The path of adventure; the bounds of the earth; the division of lands; the harbor of rivers; the source of rains; a refuge in danger; a pleasure in enjoyment.

Pepin—What are rivers?

Albinus—A ceaseless motion; a refreshment to the sun; the waters of the earth.

Pepin—What is water?

Albinus—The supporter of life; the cleanser of filth.

Pepin—What is fire?

Albinus—An excessive heat; the nurse of growing things; the ripener of crops.

Pepin—What is cold?

Albinus—The trembling of our members.

Pepin—What is frost?

Albinus—An assailer of plants; the destruction of leaves; a fetter to the earth; a bridger of streams.

Pepin—What is snow?

Albinus—Dry water.

Pepin—What is winter?

Albinus—An exile of summer.

Pepin—What is spring?

Albinus—A painter of the earth.

Pepin—What is summer?

Albinus—That which brings to the earth a new garment, and ripens the fruit.

Pepin—What is autumn?

Albinus—The barn of the year.

A LETTER FROM ALCUIN TO CHARLEMAGNE

(Written in the year 796)

I, your Flaccus, in accordance with your entreaty and your gracious kindness, am busied under the shelter of St. Martin's, in bestowing upon many of my pupils the honey of the Holy Scriptures. I am eager that others should drink deep of the old wine of ancient learning; I shall presently begin to nourish still others with the fruits of grammatical ingenuity; and some of them I am eager to enlighten with a knowledge of the order of the stars, that seem painted, as it were, on the dome of some mighty palace. I have become all things to all men (1 Cor. i. 22) so that I may train up many to the profession of God's Holy Church and to the glory of your imperial realm, lest the grace of Almighty God in me should be fruitless (1 Cor. xv. 10) and your munificent bounty of no avail. But your servant lacks the rarer books of scholastic learning, which in my own country I used to have (thanks to the generous and most devoted care of my teacher and to my own humble endeavors), and I mention it to your Majesty so that, perchance, it may please you who are eagerly concerned about the whole body of learning, to have me dispatch some of our young men to procure for us certain necessary works, and bring with them to France the flowers of England; so that a graceful garden may not exist in York alone, but so that at Tours as well there may be found the blossoming of Paradise with its abundant fruits; that the south wind, when it comes, may cause the gardens along the River Loire to burst into bloom, and their perfumed airs to stream forth, and finally, that which follows in the Canticle, whence I have drawn this simile, may be brought to pass. . . . (Canticle v. 1, 2). Or even this exhortation of the prophet Isaiah, which urges us to acquire wisdom:—"All ye who thirst, come to the waters; and you who have not money, hasten, buy and eat: come, without money and without price, and buy wine and milk" (Isaiah iv. 1.)

And this is a thing which your gracious zeal will not overlook: how upon every page of the Holy Scriptures we are urged to the acquisition of wisdom; how nothing is more honorable for insuring a happy life, nothing more pleasing in the observance, nothing more efficient against sin, nothing more praiseworthy in any lofty station, than that men live according to the teachings of the philosophers. Moreover, nothing is more essential to the government of the people, nothing better for the guidance of life into the paths of honorable character, than the grace which wisdom gives, and the glory of training and the power of learning. Therefore it is that in its praise, Solomon, the wisest of all men, exclaims, « Better is wisdom than all precious things, and more to be desired » (Prov. viii. 11 *seq*). To secure this with every possible effort and to get possession of it by daily endeavor, do you, my lord King, exhort the young men who are in your Majesty's palace, that they strive for this in the flower of their youth, so that they may be deemed worthy to live through an old age of honor, and that by its means they may be able to attain to everlasting happiness. I, myself, according to my disposition, shall not be slothful in sowing the seeds of wisdom among your servants in this land, being mindful of the injunction, « Sow thy seed in the morning, and at eventide let not thy hand cease; since thou knowest not what will spring up, whether these or those, and if both together, still better is it » (Eccles. xi. 6). In the morning of my life and in the fruitful period of my studies I sowed seed in Britain, and now that my blood has grown cool in the evening of life, I still cease not; but sow the seed in France, desiring that both may spring up by the grace of God. And now that my body has grown weak, I find consolation in the saying of St. Jerome, who declares in his letter to Nepotianus, « Almost all the powers of the body are altered in old men, and wisdom alone will increase while the rest decay. » And a little further he says, « The old age of those who have adorned their youth with noble accomplishments and have meditated on the law of the Lord both day and night becomes more and more deeply accomplished with its years, more polished from experience, more wise by the lapse of time; and it reaps the sweetest fruit of ancient learning. » In this letter in praise of wisdom, one who wishes can read many things of the scientific pursuits of the ancients, and can understand how eager were these ancients to abound in the grace of wisdom. I have noted that your zeal, which is pleasing to God and praiseworthy, is always advancing toward this wisdom and takes pleasure in it, and that you are adorning the magnificence of your worldly rule with still greater intellectual splendor. In this may our Lord Jesus Christ, who is himself the supreme type of divine wisdom, guard you and exalt you, and cause you to attain to the glory of His own blessed and everlasting vision.

HENRY M. ALDEN

(1836–)

Henry Mills Alden, since 1864 the editor of Harper's Magazine, was born in Mount Tabor, Vermont, November 11th, 1836, the eighth in descent from Captain John Alden, the Pilgrim. He graduated at Williams College, and studied theology at Andover Seminary, but was never ordained a minister, having almost immediately turned his attention to literature. His first work that attracted attention was an essay on the Eleusinian Mysteries, published in the Atlantic Monthly. The scholarship and subtle method revealed in this and similar works led to his engagement to deliver a course of twelve Lowell Institute lectures at Boston, in 1863 and 1864, and he took for his subject ‘The Structure of Paganism.’ Before this he had removed to New York, had engaged in general editorial work, and formed his lasting connection with the house of Harper and Brothers.

As an editor Mr. Alden is the most practical of men, but he is in reality a poet, and in another age he might have been a mystic. He has the secret of preserving his life to himself, while paying the keenest attention to his daily duties. In his office he is immersed in affairs which require the exercise of vigilant common-sense, and knowledge of life and literature. At his home he is a serene and optimistic philosopher, contemplating the forces that make for our civilization, and musing over the deep problems of man's occupation of this earth. In 1893 appeared anonymously a volume entitled ‘God in His World,’ which attracted instantly wide attention in this country and in England for its subtlety of thought, its boldness of treatment, its winning sweetness of temper, and its exquisite style. It was by Mr. Alden, and in 1895 it was followed by ‘A Study of Death,’ continuing the great theme of the first,—the unity of creation, the certainty that there is in no sense a war between the Creator and his creation. In this view the Universe is not divided into the Natural and the Supernatural: all is Natural. But we can speak here only of their literary quality. The author is seen to be a poet in his conceptions, but in form his writing is entirely within the limits of prose; yet it is a prose most harmonious, most melodious, and it exhibits the capacity of our English tongue in the hand of a master. The thought is sometimes so subtle as to elude the careless reader, but the charm of the melody never fails to entrance. The study of life and civilization is profound, but the grace of treatment seems to relieve the problems of half their difficulty.

His wife did not live to read the exquisite dedication given below.

From ‹A Study of Death,› copyright 1895, by Harper and Brothers

A DEDICATION

TO MY BELOVED WIFE

My earliest written expression of intimate thought or cherished fancy was for your eyes only; it was my first approach to your maidenly heart, a mystical wooing, which neglected no resource, near or remote, for the enhancement of its charm, and so involved all other mystery in its own.

In you, childhood has been inviolate, never losing its power of leading me by an unspoken invocation to a green field, ever kept fresh by a living fountain, where the Shepherd tends his flock. Now, through a body racked with pain, and sadly broken, still shines this unbroken childhood, teaching me Love's deepest mystery.

It is fitting, then, that I should dedicate to you this book touching that mystery. It has been written in the shadow, but illumined by the brightness of an angel's face seen in the darkness, so that it has seemed easy and natural for me to find at the thorn's heart a secret and everlasting sweetness far surpassing that of the rose itself, which ceases in its own perfection.

Whether that angel we have seen shall, for my need and comfort, and for your own longing, hold back his greatest gift, and leave you mine in the earthly ways we know and love, or shall hasten to make the heavenly surprise, the issue in either event will be a home-coming: if *here*, yet already the deeper secret will have been in part disclosed; and if *beyond*, that secret, fully known, will not betray the fondest hope of loving hearts. Love never denied Death, and Death will not deny Love.

From ‹A Study of Death,› copyright 1895, by Harper and Brothers

THE DOVE AND THE SERPENT

The Dove flies, and the Serpent creeps. Yet is the Dove fond, while the Serpent is the emblem of wisdom. Both were in Eden: the cooing, fluttering, wingèd spirit, loving to descend, companion-like, brooding, following; and the creeping thing which had glided into the sunshine of Paradise from the cold bosoms of those nurses of an older world — Pain, and Darkness, and Death — himself forgetting these in the warmth and green life of the Garden. And our first parents knew naught of these as yet unutterable mysteries, any more than they knew that their roses bloomed over a tomb: so that when all animate creatures came to Adam to be named, the meaning of this living allegory which passed before him was in great part hidden, and he saw no sharp line dividing the firmament below from the firmament above; rather he leaned toward the ground, as one does in a garden, seeing how quickly it was fashioned into the climbing trees, into the clean flowers, and into his own shapely frame. It was upon the ground he lay when that deep sleep fell upon him from which he woke to find his mate, lithe as the serpent, yet with the fluttering heart of the dove.

As the Dove, though winged for flight, ever descended, so the Serpent, though unable wholly to leave the ground, tried ever to lift himself therefrom, as if to escape some ancient bond. The cool nights revived and nourished his memories of an older time, wherein lay his subtile wisdom, but day by day his aspiring crest grew brighter. The life of Eden became for him oblivion, the light of the sun obscuring and confounding his reminiscence, even as for Adam and Eve this life was Illusion, the visible disguising the invisible, and pleasure veiling pain.

In Adam the culture of the ground maintained humility. He was held, moreover, in lowly content by the charm of the woman, who was to him like the earth grown human; and since she was the daughter of Sleep, her love seemed to him restful as the night. Her raven locks were like the mantle of darkness, and her voice had the laughter of streams that lapsed into unseen depths.

But Eve had something of the Serpent's unrest, as if she too had come from the Under-world, which she would fain forget, seeking liberation, urged by desire as deep as the abyss she had left behind her, and nourished from roots unfathomably hidden — the roots of the Tree of Life. She thus came to have conversation with the Serpent.

In the lengthening days of Eden's one Summer these two were more and more completely enfolded in the Illusion of Light. It was under this spell that, dwelling upon the enticement of fruit good to look at, and pleasant to the taste, the Serpent denied Death, and thought of Good as separate from Evil. "Ye shall not surely die, but shall be as the gods, knowing good and evil." So far, in his aspiring day-dream, had the Serpent fared from his old familiar haunts—so far from his old-world wisdom!

A surer omen would have come to Eve had she listened to the plaintive notes of the bewildered Dove that in his downward flutterings had begun to divine what the Serpent had come to forget, and to confess what he had come to deny.

For already was beginning to be felt "the season's difference," and the grave mystery, without which Paradise itself could not have been, was about to be unveiled,—the background of the picture becoming its foreground. The fond hands plucking the rose had found the thorn. Evil was known as something by itself, apart from Good, and Eden was left behind, as one steps out of infancy.

From that hour have the eyes of the children of men been turned from the accursed earth, looking into the blue above, straining their vision for a glimpse of white-robed angels.

Yet it was the Serpent that was lifted up in the wilderness; and when He who "became sin for us" was being bruised in the heel by the old enemy, the Dove descended upon Him at His baptism. He united the wisdom of the Serpent with the harmlessness of the Dove. Thus in Him were bound together and reconciled the elements which in human thought had been put asunder. In Him, Evil is overcome of Good, as, in Him, Death is swallowed up of Life; and with His eyes we see that the robes of angels are white, because they have been washed in blood,

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DEATH AND SLEEP

The Angel of Death is the invisible Angel of Life. While the organism is alive as a human embodiment, death is present, having the same human distinction as the life, from which it is inseparable, being, indeed, the better half of living,—its wingèd half, its rest and inspiration, its secret spring of elasticity, and quickness. Life came upon the wings of Death, and so departs.

If we think of life apart from death our thought is partial, as if we would give flight to the arrow without bending the bow.

No living movement either begins or is completed save through death. If the shuttle return not there is no web; and the texture of life is woven through this tropic movement.

It is a commonly accepted scientific truth that the continuance of life in any living thing depends upon death. But there are two ways of expressing this truth: one, regarding merely the outward fact, as when we say that animal or vegetable tissue is renewed through decay; the other, regarding the action and reaction proper to life itself, whereby it forever springs freshly from its source. The latter form of expression is mystical, in the true meaning of that term. We close our eyes to the outward appearance, in order that we may directly confront a mystery which is already past before there is any visible indication thereof. Though the imagination engaged in this mystical apprehension borrows its symbols or analogues from observation and experience, yet these symbols are spiritually regarded by looking at life on its living side, and abstracted as far as possible from outward embodiment. We especially affect physiological analogues because, being derived from our experience, we may the more readily have the inward regard of them; and by passing from one physiological analogue to another, and from all these to those furnished by the processes of nature outside of our bodies, we come to an apprehension of the action and reaction proper to life itself as an idea independent of all its physical representations.

Thus we trace the rhythmic beating of the pulse to the systole and diastole of the heart, and we note a similar alternation in the contraction and relaxation of all our muscles. Breathing is alternately inspiration and expiration. Sensation itself is by beats, and falls into rhythm. There is no uninterrupted strain of either action or sensibility; a current or a contact is renewed, having been broken. In psychical operation there is the same alternate lapse and resurgence. Memory rises from the grave of oblivion. No holding can be maintained save through alternate release. Pulsation establishes circulation, and vital motions proceed through cycles, each one of which, however minute, has its tropic of Cancer and of Capricorn. Then there are the larger physiological cycles, like that wherein sleep is the alternation of waking. Passing from the field of our direct experience to that of observation, we note similar alternations, as of day and night, summer and winter, flood and ebb tide; and science discloses them at every turn, especially in its recent consideration of the subtle forces of Nature, leading us back of all visible motions to the pulsations of the ether. . . .

In considering the action and reaction proper to life itself, we here dismiss from view all measured cycles, whose beginning and end are appreciably separate; our regard is confined to living moments, so fleet that their beginning and ending meet as in one point, which is seen to be at once the point of departure and of return. Thus we may speak of a man's life as included between his birth and his death, and with reference to this physiological term, think of him as living, and then as dead; but we may also consider him while living as yet every moment dying, and in this view death is clearly seen to be the inseparable companion of life, — the way of return, and so of continuance. This pulsation, forever a vanishing and a resurgence, so incalculably swift as to escape observation, is proper to life as life, does not begin with what we call birth nor end with what we call death (considering birth and death as terms applicable to an individual existence); it is forever beginning and forever ending. Thus to all manifest existence we apply the term Nature (*natura*), which means "forever being born"; and on its vanishing side it is *moritura*, or "forever dying." Resurrection is thus a natural and perpetual miracle. The idea of life as transcending any individual embodiment is as germane to science as it is to faith.

Death, thus seen as essential, is lifted above its temporary and visible accidents. It is no longer associated with corruption, but rather with the sweet and wholesome freshness of life, being the way of its renewal. Sweeter than the honey which Samson found in the lion's carcass is this everlasting sweetness of Death; and it is a mystery deeper than the strong man's riddle.

So is Death pure and clean, as is the dew that comes with the cool night when the sun has set; clean and white as the snowflakes that betoken the absolution which Winter gives, shriving the earth of all her Summer wantonness and excess, when only the trees that yield balsam and aromatic fragrance remain green, breaking the box of precious ointment for burial.

In this view also is restored the kinship of Death with Sleep.

The state of the infant seems to be one of chronic mysticism, since during the greater part of its days its eyes are closed to the outer world. Its larger familiarity is still with the invisible, and it seems as if the Mothers of Darkness were still withholding it as their nursling, accomplishing for it some mighty work in their proper realm, some such fiery baptism of infants as is frequently instanced in Greek mythology, tempering them for earthly trials. The infant must needs sleep while this work is being done for it; it has been sleeping since the work began, from the foundation of the world, and the old habit still clings about it and is not easily laid aside. . . .

That which we have been considering as the death that is in every moment is a reaction proper to life itself, waking or sleeping, whereby it is renewed, sharing at once Time and Eternity—time as outward form, and eternity as its essential quality. Sleep is a special relaxation, relieving a special strain. As daily we build with effort and design an elaborate superstructure above the living foundation, so must this edifice nightly be laid in ruins. Sleep is thus a disembarrassment, the unloading of a burden wherewith we have weighted ourselves. Here again we are brought into a kind of repentance, and receive absolution. Sleep is forgiveness.

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THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL

I

STANDING at the gate of Birth, it would seem as if it were the vital destination of all things to fly from their source, as if it were the dominant desire of life to enter into limitations. We might mentally represent to ourselves an essence simple and indivisible that denies itself in diversified manifold existence. To us, this side the veil, nay, immeshed in innumerable veils that hide from us the Father's face, this insistence appears to have the stress of urgency, as if the effort of all being, its unceasing travail, were like the beating of the infinite ocean upon the shores of Time; and as if, within the continent of Time, all existence were forever knocking at new gates, seeking, through some as yet untried path of progression, greater complexity, a deeper involvement. All the children seem to be beseeching the Father to divide unto them His living, none willingly abiding in that Father's house. But in reality their will is His will—they fly, and they are driven, like fledglings from the mother-nest.

II

The story of a solar system, or of any synthesis in time, repeats the parable of the Prodigal Son, in its essential features. It is a cosmic parable.

The planet is a wanderer (*planes*), and the individual planetary destiny can be accomplished only through flight from its source. After all its prodigality it shall sicken and return.

Attributing to the Earth, thus apparently separated from the Sun, some macrocosmic sentience, what must have been her wondering dream, finding herself at once thrust away and securely held, poised between her flight and her bond, and so swinging into a regular orbit about the Sun, while at the same time, in her rotation, turning to him and away from him — into the light, and into the darkness, forever denying and confessing her lord! Her emotion must have been one of delight, however mingled with a feeling of timorous awe, since her desire could not have been other than one with her destination. Despite the distance and the growing coolness she could feel the kinship still; her pulse, though modulated, was still in rhythm with that of the solar heart, and in her bosom were hidden consubstantial fires. But it was the sense of otherness, of her own distinct individuation, that was mainly being nourished, this sense, moreover, being proper to her destiny; therefore, the signs of her likeness to the Sun were more and more being buried from her view; her fires were veiled by a hardening crust, and her opaqueness stood out against his light. She had no regret for all she was surrendering, thinking only of her gain, of being clothed upon with a garment showing ever some new fold of surprising beauty and wonder. If she had remained in the Father's house — like the elder brother in the Parable — then would all that He had have been hers, in nebulous simplicity. But now, holding her revels apart, she seems to sing her own song, and to dream her own beautiful dream, wandering, with a motion wholly her own, among the gardens of cosmic order and loveliness. She glories in her many veils, which, though they hide from her both her source and her very self, are the media through which the invisible light is broken into multiform illusions that enrich her dream. She beholds the Sun as a far-off, insphered being existing for her, her ministrant bridegroom; and when her face is turned away from him into the night, she beholds innumerable suns, a myriad of archangels, all witnesses of some infinitely remote and central flame — the Spirit of all life. Yet, in the midst of these visible images, she is absorbed in her individual dream, wherein she appears to herself to be the mother of all living. It is proper to her destiny that she should be thus enwrapped in her own distinct action and passion, and refer to herself the appearances of a universe. While all that is not she is what she really is,— necessary, that is, to her full definition,— she, on the other hand, from herself interprets all else. This is the inevitable terrestrial idealism, peculiar to every individuation in time — the individual thus balancing the universe.

III

In reality, the Earth has never left the Sun; apart from him she has no life, any more than has the branch severed from the vine. More truly it may be said that the Sun has never left the Earth.

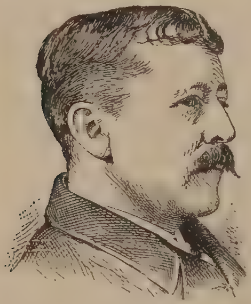
No prodigal can really leave the Father's house, any more than he can leave himself; coming to himself, he feels the Father's arms about him — they have always been there — he is newly appareled, and wears the signet ring of native prestige; he hears the sound of familiar music and dancing, and it may be that the young and beautiful forms mingling with him in this festival are the riotous youths and maidens of his far-country revels, also come to themselves and home, of whom also the Father saith: These were dead and are alive again, they were lost and are found. The starvation and sense of exile had been parts of a troubled dream — a dream which had also had its ecstasy, but had come into a consuming fever, with delirious imaginings of fresh fountains, of shapes drawn from the memory of childhood, and of the cool touch of kindred hands upon the brow. So near is exile to home, misery to divine commiseration — so near are pain and death, desolation and divestiture, to “a new creature,” and to the kinship involved in all creation and re-creation.

Distance in the cosmic order is a standing-apart, which is only another expression of the expansion and abundance of creative life; but at every remove its reflex is nearness, a bond of attraction, insphering and curving, making orb and orbit. While in space this attraction is diminished — being inversely as the square of the distance — and so there is maintained and emphasized the appearance of suspension and isolation, yet in time it gains preponderance, contracting sphere and orbit, aging planets and suns, and accumulating destruction, which at the point of annihilation becomes a new creation. This Grand Cycle, which is but a pulsation or breath of the Eternal life, illustrates a truth which is repeated in its least and most minutely divided moment — that birth lies next to death, as water crystallizes at the freezing-point, and the plant blossoms at points most remote from the source of nutrition.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

(1837–)

A poet in verse often becomes a poet in prose also, in composing novels; although the novelist may not, and in general does not, possess the faculty of writing poems. The poet-novelist is apt to put into his prose a good deal of the same charm and the same picturesque choice of phrase and image that characterize his verse; while it does not follow that the novelist who at times writes verse — like George Eliot, for example — succeeds in giving a distinctly poetic quality to prose, or even wishes to do so. Among authors who have displayed peculiar power and won fame in the dual capacity of poet and of prose romancer or novelist, Sir Walter Scott and Victor Hugo no doubt stand pre-eminent; and in American literature, Edgar Allan Poe and Oliver Wendell Holmes very strikingly combine these two functions. Another American author who has gained a distinguished position both as a poet and as a writer of prose fiction and essays is Thomas Bailey Aldrich.


Thomas B. Aldrich

It is upon his work in the form of verse, perhaps, that Aldrich's chief renown is based; but some of his short stories in especial have contributed much to his popularity, no less than to his repute as a delicate and polished artificer in words. A New Englander, he has infused into some of his poems the true atmosphere of New England, and has given the same light and color of home to his prose, while imparting to his productions in both kinds a delightful tinge of the foreign and remote. In addition to his capacities as a poet and a romancer, he is a wit and humorist of sparkling quality. In reading his books one seems also to inhale the perfumes of Arabia and the farther East, blended with the salt sea-breeze and the pine-scented air of his native State, New Hampshire.

He was born in the old seaside town of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, November 11th, 1837; but moved to New York City in 1854, at the age of seventeen. There he remained until 1866; beginning his work quite early; forming his literary character by reading and observation, by the writing of poems, and by practice and experience of writing prose sketches and articles for journals and periodicals. During this period he entered into associations with the poets Stedman, Stoddard, and Bayard Taylor, and was more or less in touch with the group that included Walt Whitman, Fitz-James O'Brien, and William Winter. Removing to Boston in January, 1866, he became the editor of Every Saturday, and remained in that post until 1874, when he resigned. In 1875 he made a long tour in Europe, plucking the first fruits of foreign travel, which were succeeded by many rich and dainty gatherings from the same source in later years. In the intervals of these wanderings he lived in Boston and Cambridge; occupying for a time James Russell Lowell's historic house of Elmwood, in the semi-rural university city; and then established a pretty country house at Ponkapog, a few miles west of Boston. This last suggested the title for a charming book of travel papers, 'From Ponkapog to Pesth.' In 1881 he was appointed editor of the Atlantic Monthly, and continued to direct that famous magazine for nine years, frequently making short trips to Europe, extending his tours as far as the heart of Russia, and gathering fresh materials for essay or song. Much of his time since giving up the Atlantic editorship has been passed in voyaging, and in 1894–5 he made a journey around the world.

From the beginning he struck with quiet certainty the vein that was his by nature in poetry; and this has broadened almost continually, yielding richer results, which have been worked out with an increasing refinement of skill. His predilection is for the picturesque; for romance combined with simplicity, purity, and tenderness of feeling, touched by fancy and by occasional lights of humor so reserved and dainty that they never disturb the pictorial harmony. The capacity for unaffected utterance of feeling on matters common to humanity reached a climax in the poem of 'Baby Bell,' which by its sympathetic and delicate description of a child's advent and death gave the author a claim to the affections of a wide circle; and this remained for a long time probably the best known among his poems. 'Friar Jerome's Beautiful Book' is another of the earlier favorites. 'Spring in New England' has since come to hold high rank both for its vivid and graceful description of the season, for its tender fervor of patriotism, and for its sentiment of reconciliation between North and South. The lines on ‹Piscataqua River› remain one of the best illustrations of boyhood memories, and have something of Whittier's homely truth. In his longer narrative pieces, ‹Judith› and ‹Wyndham Towers,› cast in the mold of blank-verse idyls, Mr. Aldrich does not seem so much himself as in many of his briefer flights. An instinctive dramatic tendency finds outlet in ‹Pauline Paulovna› and ‹Mercedes›— the latter of which, a two-act piece in prose, has found representation in the theatre; yet in these, also, he is less eminently successful than in his lyrics and society verse.

No American poet has wrought his stanzas with greater faithfulness to an exacting standard of craftsmanship than Mr. Aldrich, or has known better when to leave a line loosely cast, and when to reinforce it with correction or with a syllable that might seem, to an ear less true, redundant. This gives to his most carefully chiseled productions an air of spontaneous ease, and has made him eminent as a sonneteer. His sonnet on ‹Sleep› is one of the finest in the language. The conciseness and concentrated aptness of his expression also — together with a faculty of bringing into conjunction subtly contrasted thoughts, images, or feelings — has issued happily in short, concentrated pieces like ‹An Untimely Thought,› ‹Destiny,› and ‹Identity,› and in a number of pointed and effective quatrains. Without overmastering purpose outside of art itself, his is the poetry of luxury rather than of deep passion or conviction; yet, with the freshness of bud and tint in springtime, it still always relates itself effectively to human experience. The author's specially American quality, also, though not dominant, comes out clearly in ‹Unguarded Gates,› and with a differing tone in the plaintive Indian legend of ‹Miantowona.›

If we perceive in his verse a kinship with the dainty ideals of Théophile Gautier and Alfred de Musset, this does not obscure his originality or his individual charm; and the same thing may be said with regard to his prose. The first of his short fictions that made a decided mark was ‹Marjorie Daw.› The fame which it gained, in its separate field, was as swift and widespread as that of Hawthorne's ‹The Gentle Boy› or Bret Harte's ‹Luck of Roaring Camp.› It is a bright and half-pathetic little parody on human life and affection; or perhaps we should call it a parable symbolizing the power which imagination wields over real life, even in supposedly unimaginative people. The covert smile which it involves, at the importance of human emotions, may be traced to a certain extent in some of Mr. Aldrich's longer and more serious works of fiction: his three novels, 'Prudence Palfrey,' 'The Queen of Sheba,' and 'The Stillwater Tragedy.' 'The Story of a Bad Boy,' frankly but quietly humorous in its record of the pranks and vicissitudes of a healthy average lad (with the scene of the story localized at old Portsmouth, under the name of Rivermouth), a less ambitious work, still holds a secure place in the affections of many mature as well as younger readers. Besides these books, Mr. Aldrich has published a collection of short descriptive, reminiscent, and half-historic papers on Portsmouth,—'An Old Town by the Sea'; with a second volume of short stories entitled 'Two Bites at a Cherry.' The character-drawing in his fiction is clear-cut and effective, often sympathetic, and nearly always suffused with an agreeable coloring of humor. There are notes of pathos, too, in some of his tales; and it is the blending of these qualities, through the medium of a lucid and delightful style, that defines his pleasing quality in prose.

DESTINY

THREE roses, wan as moonlight, and weighed down
Each with its loveliness as with a crown,
Drooped in a florist's window in a town.

The first a lover bought. It lay at rest,
Like flower on flower, that night, on Beauty's breast.

The second rose, as virginal and fair,
Shrunk in the tangles of a harlot's hair.

The third, a widow, with new grief made wild,
Shut in the icy palm of her dead child.

IDENTITY

SOMEWHERE—in desolate wind-swept space—
In Twilight-land—in No-man's land—
Two hurrying Shapes met face to face,
And bade each other stand.

«And who are you?» cried one, agape,
Shuddering in the gloaming light.
«I know not,» said the second Shape,
«I only died last night!»

PRESCIENCE

THE new moon hung in the sky, the sun was low in the west,
And my betrothed and I in the churchyard paused to rest—
Happy maiden and lover, dreaming the old dream over:
The light winds wandered by, and robins chirped from the nest.

And lo! in the meadow-sweet was the grave of a little child,
With a crumbling stone at the feet and the ivy running wild—
Tangled ivy and clover folding it over and over:
Close to my sweetheart's feet was the little mound up-piled.

Stricken with nameless fears, she shrank and clung to me,
And her eyes were filled with tears for a sorrow I did not see:
Lightly the winds were blowing, softly her tears were flowing—
Tears for the unknown years and a sorrow that was to be!

ALEC YEATON'S SON

GLOUCESTER, AUGUST, 1720

THE wind it wailed, the wind it moaned,
And the white caps flecked the sea;
«An' I would to God,» the skipper groaned,
«I had not my boy with me!»

Snug in the stern-sheets, little John
Laughed as the scud swept by;
But the skipper's sunburnt cheek grew wan
As he watched the wicked sky.

«Would he were at his mother's side!»
And the skipper's eyes were dim.
«Good Lord in heaven, if ill betide,
What would become of him!

«For me—my muscles are as steel,
For me let hap what may;
I might make shift upon the keel
Until the break o' day.

«But he, he is so weak and small,
So young, scarce learned to stand—
O pitying Father of us all,
I trust him in thy hand!

«For thou who markest from on high
A sparrow's fall—each one!—
Surely, O Lord, thou'lt have an eye
On Alec Yeaton's son!»

Then, helm hard-port; right straight he sailed
Towards the headland light:
The wind it moaned, the wind it wailed,
And black, black fell the night.

Then burst a storm to make one quail,
Though housed from winds and waves—
They who could tell about that gale
Must rise from watery graves!

Sudden it came, as sudden went;
Ere half the night was sped,
The winds were hushed, the waves were spent,
And the stars shone overhead.

Now, as the morning mist grew thin,
The folk on Gloucester shore
Saw a little figure floating in
Secure, on a broken oar!

Up rose the cry, «A wreck! a wreck!
Pull mates, and waste no breath!»—
They knew it, though 'twas but a speck
Upon the edge of death!

Long did they marvel in the town
At God his strange decree,
That let the stalwart skipper drown
And the little child go free!

MEMORY

My mind lets go a thousand things,
Like dates of wars and deaths of kings,
And yet recalls the very hour—
'T was noon by yonder village tower,
And on the last blue noon in May—
The wind came briskly up this way,
Crisping the brook beside the road;
Then, pausing here, set down its load
Of pine-scents, and shook listlessly
Two petals from that wild-rose tree.

TENNYSON (1890)

I

SHAKESPEARE and Milton — what third blazoned name
Shall lips of after ages link to these?
His who, beside the wild encircling seas,
Was England's voice, her voice with one acclaim,
For threescore years; whose word of praise was fame,
Whose scorn gave pause to man's iniquities.

II

What strain was his in that Crimean war?
A bugle-call in battle; a low breath,
Plaintive and sweet, above the fields of death!
So year by year the music rolled afar,
From Euxine wastes to flowery Kandahar,
Bearing the laurel or the cypress wreath.

III

Others shall have their little space of time,
Their proper niche and bust, then fade away
Into the darkness, poets of a day;
But thou, O builder of enduring rhyme,
Thou shalt not pass! Thy fame in every clime
On earth shall live where Saxon speech has sway.

IV

Waft me this verse across the winter sea,
Through light and dark, through mist and blinding sleet,
O winter winds, and lay it at his feet;
Though the poor gift betray my poverty,
At his feet lay it; it may chance that he
Will find no gift, where reverence is, unmeet.

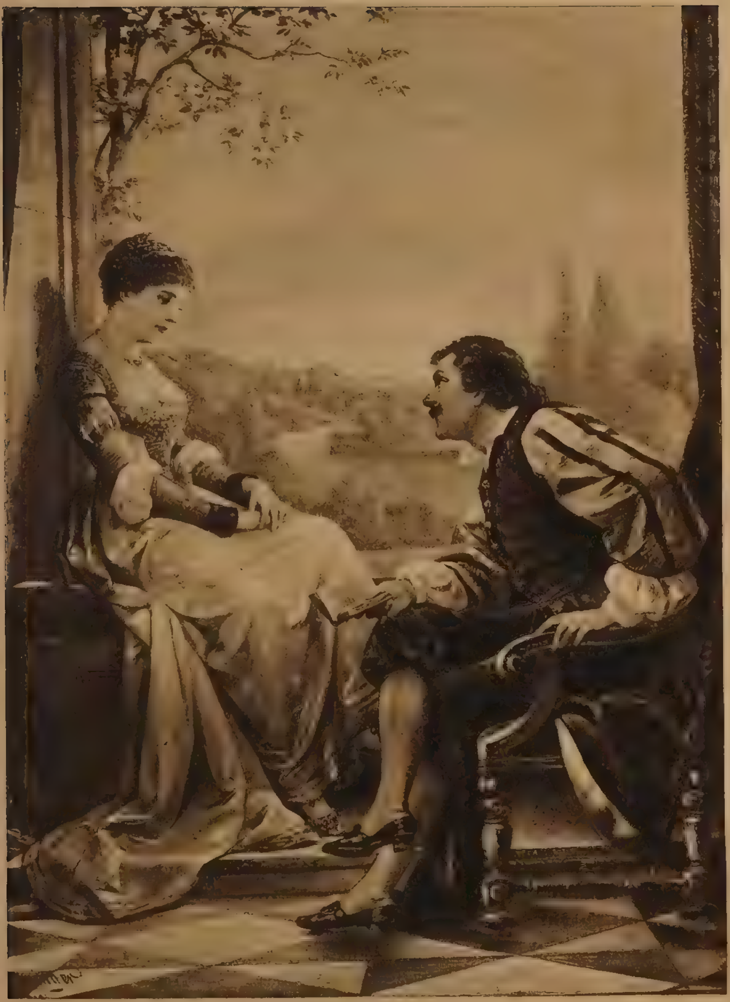
SWEETHEART, SIGH NO MORE

IT WAS with doubt and trembling
I whispered in her ear.
Go, take her answer, bird-on-bough,
That all the world may hear —
Sweetheart, sigh no more!

Sing it, sing it, tawny throat,
Upon the wayside tree,

POETRY.

Photogravure from a painting by C. Schweninger.



How fair she is, how true she is,
How dear she is to me—
Sweetheart, sigh no more!

Sing it, sing it, and through the summer long
The winds among the clover-tops,
And brooks, for all their silvery stops,
Shall envy you the song—
Sweetheart, sigh no more!

BROKEN MUSIC

«A note
All out of tune in this world's instrument.»
AMY LEVY.

I KNOW not in what fashion she was made,
Nor what her voice was, when she used to speak,
Nor if the silken lashes threw a shade
On wan or rosy cheek.

I picture her with sorrowful vague eyes,
Illumed with such strange gleams of inner light
As linger in the drift of London skies
Ere twilight turns to night.

I know not; I conjecture. 'Twas a girl
That with her own most gentle desperate hand
From out God's mystic setting plucked life's pearl—
'Tis hard to understand.

So precious life is! Even to the old
The hours are as a miser's coins, and she—
Within her hands lay youth's unminted gold
And all felicity.

The winged impetuous spirit, the white flame
That was her soul once, whither has it flown?
Above her brow gray lichens blot her name
Upon the carven stone.

This is her Book of Verses—wren-like notes,
Shy franknesses, blind gropings, haunting fears;
At times across the chords abruptly floats
A mist of passionate tears.

A fragile lyre too tensely keyed and strung,
A broken music, weirdly incomplete:
Here a proud mind, self-baffled and self-stung,
Lies coiled in dark defeat.

ELMWOOD

In Memory of James Russell Lowell

Here, in the twilight, at the well-known gate
I linger, with no heart to enter more.
Among the elm-tops the autumnal air
Murmurs, and spectral in the fading light
A solitary heron wings its way
Southward—save this no sound or touch of life.
Dark is the window where the scholar's lamp
Was used to catch a pallor from the dawn.

Yet I must needs a little linger here.
Each shrub and tree is eloquent of him,
For tongueless things and silence have their speech.
This is the path familiar to his foot
From infancy to manhood and old age;
For in a chamber of that ancient house
His eyes first opened on the mystery
Of life, and all the splendor of the world.
Here, as a child, in loving, curious way,
He watched the bluebird's coming; learned the date
Of hyacinth and goldenrod, and made
Friends of those little redmen of the elms,
And slyly added to their winter store
Of hazel-nuts: no harmless thing that breathed,
Footed or winged, but knew him for a friend.
The gilded butterfly was not afraid
To trust its gold to that so gentle hand,
The bluebird fled not from the pendent spray.
Ah, happy childhood, ringed with fortunate stars!
What dreams were his in this enchanted sphere,
What intuitions of high destiny!
The honey-bees of Hybla touched his lips
In that old New-World garden, unawares.

So in her arms did Mother Nature fold
Her poet, whispering what of wild and sweet
Into his ear—the state-affairs of birds,
The lore of dawn and sunset, what the wind
Said in the tree-tops—fine, unfathomed things
Henceforth to turn to music in his brain:
A various music, now like notes of flutes,
And now like blasts of trumpets blown in wars.

Later he paced this leafy academe
A student, drinking from Greek chalices
The ripened vintage of the antique world.
And here to him came love, and love's dear loss;
Here honors came, the deep applause of men
Touched to the heart by some swift-wingèd word
That from his own full heart took eager flight—
Some strain of piercing sweetness or rebuke,
For underneath his gentle nature flamed
A noble scorn for all ignoble deed,
Himself a bondman till all men were free.

Thus passed his manhood; then to other lands
He strayed, a stainless figure among courts
Beside the Manzanares and the Thames.
Whence, after too long exile, he returned
With fresher laurel, but sedater step
And eye more serious, fain to breathe the air
Where through the Cambridge marshes the blue Charles
Uncoils its length and stretches to the sea:
Stream dear to him, at every curve a shrine
For pilgrim Memory. Again he watched
His loved syringa whitening by the door,
And knew the catbird's welcome; in his walks
Smiled on his tawny kinsmen of the elms
Stealing his nuts; and in the ruined year
Sat at his widowed hearthside with bent brows
Leonine, frosty with the breath of time,
And listened to the crooning of the wind
In the wide Elmwood chimneys, as of old.
And then—and then . . .

The after-glow has faded from the elms,
And in the denser darkness of the boughs
From time to time the firefly's tiny lamp
Sparkles. How often in still summer dusks
He paused to note that transient phantom spark
Flash on the air—a light that outlasts him!

The night grows chill, as if it felt a breath
Blown from that frozen city where he lies.
All things turn strange. The leaf that rustles here
Has more than autumn's mournfulness. The place
Is heavy with his absence. Like fixed eyes
Whence the dear light of sense and thought has fled,

The vacant windows stare across the lawn.
The wise sweet spirit that informed it all
Is otherwhere. The house itself is dead.

O autumn wind among the sombre pines,
Breathe you his dirge, but be it sweet and low.
With deep refrains and murmurs of the sea,
Like to his verse — the art is yours alone.
His once — you taught him. Now no voice but yours!
Tender and low, O wind among the pines.
I would, were mine a lyre of richer strings,
In soft Sicilian accents wrap his name.

SEA LONGINGS

THE first world-sound that fell upon my ear
Was that of the great winds along the coast
Crushing the deep-sea beryl on the rocks —
The distant breakers' sullen cannonade.
Against the spires and gables of the town
The white fog drifted, catching here and there
At overleaning cornice or peaked roof,
And hung — weird gonfalons. The garden walks
Were choked with leaves, and on their ragged biers
Lay dead the sweets of summer — damask rose,
Clove-pink, old-fashioned, loved New England flowers
Only keen salt-sea odors filled the air.
Sea-sounds, sea-odors — these were all my world.
Hence is it that life languishes with me
Inland; the valleys stifle me with gloom
And pent-up prospect; in their narrow bound
Imagination flutters futile wings.
Vainly I seek the sloping pearl-white sand
And the mirage's phantom citadels
Miraculous, a moment seen, then gone.
Among the mountains I am ill at ease,
Missing the stretched horizon's level line
And the illimitable restless blue.
The crag-torn sky is not the sky I love,
But one unbroken sapphire spanning all;
And nobler than the branches of a pine
Aslant upon a precipice's edge
Are the strained spars of some great battle-ship
Plowing across the sunset. No bird's lilt

So takes me as the whistling of the gale
Among the shrouds. My cradle-song was this,
Strange inarticulate sorrows of the sea,
Blithe rhythms upgathered from the Sirens' caves.
Perchance of earthly voices the last voice
That shall an instant my freed spirit stay
On this world's verge, will be some message blown
Over the dim salt lands that fringe the coast
At dusk, or when the trancèd midnight droops
With weight of stars, or haply just as dawn,
Illumining the sullen purple wave,
Turns the gray pools and willow-stems to gold.

A SHADOW OF THE NIGHT

CLOSE on the edge of a midsummer dawn
In troubled dreams I went from land to land,
Each seven-colored like the rainbow's arc,
Regions where never fancy's foot had trod
Till then; yet all the strangeness seemed not strange,
At which I wondered, reasoning in my dream
With twofold sense, well knowing that I slept.
At last I came to this our cloud-hung earth,
And somewhere by the seashore was a grave,
A woman's grave, new-made, and heaped with flowers;
And near it stood an ancient holy man
That fain would comfort me, who sorrowed not
For this unknown dead woman at my feet.
But I, because his sacred office held
My reverence, listened; and 'twas thus he spake:—
«When next thou comest thou shalt find her still
In all the rare perfection that she was.
Thou shalt have gentle greeting of thy love!
Her eyelids will have turned to violets,
Her bosom to white lilies, and her breath
To roses. What is lovely never dies,
But passes into other loveliness,
Star-dust, or sea-foam, flower, or wingèd air.
If this befalls our poor unworthy flesh,
Think thee what destiny awaits the soul!
What glorious vesture it shall wear at last!»
While yet he spoke, seashore and grave and priest
Vanished, and faintly from a neighboring spire
Fell five slow solemn strokes upon my ear.

Then I awoke with a keen pain at heart,
A sense of swift unutterable loss,
And through the darkness reached my hand to touch
Her cheek, soft-pillowed on one restful palm—
To be quite sure!

OUTWARD BOUND

I LEAVE behind me the elm-shadowed square
And carven portals of the silent street,
And wander on with listless, vagrant feet
Through seaward-leading alleys, till the air
Smells of the sea, and straightway then the care
Slips from my heart, and life once more is sweet.
At the lane's ending lie the white-winged fleet.
O restless Fancy, whither wouldst thou fare?
Here are brave pinions that shall take thee far—
Gaunt hulks of Norway; ships of red Ceylon;
Slim-masted lovers of the blue Azores!
'Tis but an instant hence to Zanzibar,
Or to the regions of the Midnight Sun:
Ionian isles are thine, and all the fairy shores!

REMINISCENCE

THOUGH I am native to this frozen zone
That half the twelvemonth torpid lies, or dead;
Though the cold azure arching overhead
And the Atlantic's never-ending moan
Are mine by heritage, I must have known
Life otherwhere in epochs long since fled;
For in my veins some Orient blood is red,
And through my thought are lotus blossoms blown.
I do remember . . . it was just at dusk,
Near a walled garden at the river's turn,
(A thousand summers seem but yesterday!)
A Nubian girl, more sweet than Khoorja musk,
Came to the water-tank to fill her urn,
And with the urn she bore my heart away!

PÈRE ANTOINE'S DATE-PALM

NEAR the Levée, and not far from the old French Cathedral in the Place d'Armes, at New Orleans, stands a fine date-palm, thirty feet in height, spreading its broad leaves in the alien air as hardily as if its sinuous roots were sucking strength from their native earth.

Sir Charles Lyell, in his 'Second Visit to the United States,' mentions this exotic:—"The tree is seventy or eighty years old; for Père Antoine, a Roman Catholic priest, who died about twenty years ago, told Mr. Bringier that he planted it himself, when he was young. In his will he provided that they who succeeded to this lot of ground should forfeit it if they cut down the palm."

Wishing to learn something of Père Antoine's history, Sir Charles Lyell made inquiries among the ancient creole inhabitants of the faubourg. That the old priest, in his last days, became very much emaciated, that he walked about the streets like a mummy, that he gradually dried up, and finally blew away, was the meagre and unsatisfactory result of the tourist's investigations. This is all that is generally told of Père Antoine.

In the summer of 1861, while New Orleans was yet occupied by the Confederate forces, I met at Alexandria, in Virginia, a lady from Louisiana—Miss Blondeau by name—who gave me the substance of the following legend touching Père Antoine and his wonderful date-palm. If it should appear tame to the reader, it will be because I am not habited in a black ribbed-silk dress, with a strip of point-lace around my throat, like Miss Blondeau; it will be because I lack her eyes and lips and Southern music to tell it with.

When Père Antoine was a very young man, he had a friend whom he loved as he loved his life. Émile Jardin returned his passion, and the two, on account of their friendship, became the marvel of the city where they dwelt. One was never seen without the other; for they studied, walked, ate, and slept together.

Thus began Miss Blondeau, with the air of Fiammetta telling her prettiest story to the Florentines in the garden of Boccaccio.

Antoine and Émile were preparing to enter the Church; indeed, they had taken the preliminary steps, when a circumstance occurred which changed the color of their lives. A foreign lady, from some nameless island in the Pacific, had a few months before moved into their neighborhood. The lady died suddenly, leaving a girl of sixteen or seventeen, entirely friendless and unprovided for. The young men had been kind to the woman during her illness, and at her death — melting with pity at the forlorn situation of Anglice, the daughter — swore between themselves to love and watch over her as if she were their sister.

Now Anglice had a wild, strange beauty that made other women seem tame beside her; and in the course of time the young men found themselves regarding their ward not so much like brothers as at first. In brief, they found themselves in love with her.

They struggled with their hopeless passion month after month, neither betraying his secret to the other; for the austere orders which they were about to assume precluded the idea of love and marriage. Until then they had dwelt in the calm air of religious meditations, unmoved except by that pious fervor which in other ages taught men to brave the tortures of the rack and to smile amid the flames. But a blonde girl, with great eyes and a voice like the soft notes of a vesper hymn, had come in between them and their ascetic dreams of heaven. The ties that had bound the young men together snapped silently one by one. At last each read in the pale face of the other the story of his own despair.

And she? If Anglice shared their trouble, her face told no story. It was like the face of a saint on a cathedral window. Once, however, as she came suddenly upon the two men and overheard words that seemed to burn like fire on the lip of the speaker, her eyes grew luminous for an instant. Then she passed on, her face as immobile as before in its setting of wavy gold hair.

«Entre or et roux Dieu fit ses longs cheveux.»

One night Émile and Anglice were missing. They had flown — but whither, nobody knew, and nobody save Antoine cared. It was a heavy blow to Antoine — for he had himself half resolved to confess his love to Anglice and urge her to fly with him.

A strip of paper slipped from a volume on Antoine's *prie-dieu*, and fluttered to his feet.

« *Do not be angry,* » said the bit of paper, piteously; « *forgive us, for we love.* » (« Pardonnez-nous, car nous aimons. »)

Three years went by wearily enough. Antoine had entered the Church, and was already looked upon as a rising man; but his face was pale and his heart leaden, for there was no sweetness in life for him.

Four years had elapsed, when a letter, covered with outlandish postmarks, was brought to the young priest—a letter from Anglice. She was dying;—would he forgive her? Émile, the year previous, had fallen a victim to the fever that raged on the island; and their child, Anglice, was likely to follow him. In pitiful terms she begged Antoine to take charge of the child until she was old enough to enter the convent of the Sacré-Cœur. The epistle was finished hastily by another hand, informing Antoine of Madame Jardin's death; it also told him that Anglice had been placed on board a vessel shortly to leave the island for some Western port.

The letter, delayed by storm and shipwreck, was hardly read and wept over when little Anglice arrived.

On beholding her, Antoine uttered a cry of joy and surprise—she was so like the woman he had worshiped.

The passion that had been crowded down in his heart broke out and lavished its richness on this child, who was to him not only the Anglice of years ago, but his friend Émile Jardin also.

Anglice possessed the wild, strange beauty of her mother—the bending, willowy form, the rich tint of skin, the large tropical eyes, that had almost made Antoine's sacred robes a mockery to him.

For a month or two Anglice was wildly unhappy in her new home. She talked continually of the bright country where she was born, the fruits and flowers and blue skies, the tall, fan-like trees, and the streams that went murmuring through them to the sea. Antoine could not pacify her.

By and by she ceased to weep, and went about the cottage in a weary, disconsolate way that cut Antoine to the heart. A long-tailed paroquet, which she had brought with her in the ship, walked solemnly behind her from room to room, mutely pining, it seemed, for those heavy orient airs that used to ruffle its brilliant plumage.

Before the year ended, he noticed that the ruddy tinge had faded from her cheek, that her eyes had grown languid, and her slight figure more willowy than ever.

A physician was consulted. He could discover nothing wrong with the child, except this fading and drooping. He failed to account for that. It was some vague disease of the mind, he said, beyond his skill.

So Anglice faded day after day. She seldom left the room now. At last Antoine could not shut out the fact that the child was passing away. He had learned to love her so!

« Dear heart, » he said once, « What is 't ails thee ? »

« Nothing, mon père, » for so she called him.

The winter passed, the balmy spring had come with its magnolia blooms and orange blossoms, and Anglice seemed to revive. In her small bamboo chair, on the porch, she swayed to and fro in the fragrant breeze, with a peculiar undulating motion, like a graceful tree.

At times something seemed to weigh upon her mind. Antoine observed it, and waited. Finally she spoke.

« Near our house, » said little Anglice — « near our house, on the island, the palm-trees are waving under the blue sky. Oh, how beautiful! I seem to lie beneath them all day long. I am very, very happy. I yearned for them so much that I grew ill — don't you think it was so, mon père ? »

« Hélas, yes! » exclaimed Antoine, suddenly. « Let us hasten to those pleasant islands where the palms are waving. »

Anglice smiled. « I am going there, mon père. »

A week from that evening the wax candles burned at her feet and forehead, lighting her on the journey.

All was over. Now was Antoine's heart empty. Death, like another Émile, had stolen his new Anglice. He had nothing to do but to lay the blighted flower away.

Père Antoine made a shallow grave in his garden, and heaped the fresh brown mold over his idol.

In the tranquil spring evenings, the priest was seen sitting by the mound, his finger closed in the unread breviary.

The summer broke on that sunny land; and in the cool morning twilight, and after nightfall, Antoine lingered by the grave. He could never be with it enough.

One morning he observed a delicate stem, with two curiously shaped emerald leaves, springing up from the centre of the mound. At first he merely noticed it casually; but presently the plant grew so tall, and was so strangely unlike anything he had ever seen before, that he examined it with care.

How straight and graceful and exquisite it was! When it swung to and fro with the summer wind, in the twilight, it seemed to Antoine as if little Anglice were standing there in the garden.

The days stole by, and Antoine tended the fragile shoot, wondering what manner of blossom it would unfold, white, or scarlet, or golden. One Sunday, a stranger, with a bronzed, weather-beaten face like a sailor's, leaned over the garden rail, and said to him, "What a fine young date-palm you have there, sir!"

"Mon Dieu!" cried Père Antoine starting, "and is it a palm?"

"Yes, indeed," returned the man. "I didn't reckon the tree would flourish in this latitude."

"Ah, mon Dieu!" was all the priest could say aloud; but he murmured to himself, "Bon Dieu, vous m'avez donné cela!"

If Père Antoine loved the tree before, he worshiped it now. He watered it, and nurtured it, and could have clasped it in his arms. Here were Émile and Anglice and the child, all in one!

The years glided away, and the date-palm and the priest grew together—only one became vigorous and the other feeble. Père Antoine had long passed the meridian of life. The tree was in its youth. It no longer stood in an isolated garden; for pretentious brick and stucco houses had clustered about Antoine's cottage. They looked down scowling on the humble thatched roof. The city was edging up, trying to crowd him off his land. But he clung to it like lichen and refused to sell.

Speculators piled gold on his doorsteps, and he laughed at them. Sometimes he was hungry, and cold, and thinly clad; but he laughed none the less.

"Get thee behind me, Satan!" said the old priest's smile.

Père Antoine was very old now, scarcely able to walk; but he could sit under the pliant, caressing leaves of his palm, loving it like an Arab; and there he sat till the grimmest of speculators came to him. But even in death Père Antoine was faithful to his trust: the owner of that land loses it if he harm the date-tree.

And there it stands in the narrow, dingy street, a beautiful, dreamy stranger, an exquisite foreign lady whose grace is a joy to the eye, the incense of whose breath makes the air enamored. May the hand wither that touches her ungently!

"*Because it grew from the heart of little Anglice*," said Miss Blondeau tenderly.

MISS MEHETABEL'S SON

I

THE OLD TAVERN AT BAYLEY'S FOUR-CORNERS

YOU will not find Greenton, or Bayley's Four-Corners as it is more usually designated, on any map of New England that I know of. It is not a town; it is not even a village: it is merely an absurd hotel. The almost indescribable place called Greenton is at the intersection of four roads, in the heart of New Hampshire, twenty miles from the nearest settlement of note, and ten miles from any railway station. A good location for a hotel, you will say. Precisely; but there has always been a hotel there, and for the last dozen years it has been pretty well patronized — by one boarder. Not to trifle with an intelligent public, I will state at once that, in the early part of this century, Greenton was a point at which the mail-coach on the Great Northern Route stopped to change horses and allow the passengers to dine. People in the county, wishing to take the early mail Portsmouth-ward, put up over night at the old tavern, famous for its irreproachable larder and soft feather-beds. The tavern at that time was kept by Jonathan Bayley, who rivaled his wallet in growing corpulent, and in due time passed away. At his death the establishment, which included a farm, fell into the hands of a son-in-law. Now, though Bayley left his son-in-law a hotel — which sounds handsome — he left him no guests; for at about the period of the old man's death the old stagecoach died also. Apoplexy carried off one, and steam the other. Thus, by a sudden swerve in the tide of progress, the tavern at the Corners found itself high and dry, like a wreck on a sandbank. Shortly after this event, or maybe contemporaneously, there was some attempt to build a town at Greenton; but it apparently failed, if eleven cellars choked up with *débris* and overgrown with burdocks are any indication of failure. The farm, however, was a good farm, as things go in New Hampshire, and Tobias Sewell, the son-in-law, could afford to snap his fingers at the traveling public if they came near enough — which they never did.

The hotel remains to-day pretty much the same as when Jonathan Bayley handed in his accounts in 1840, except that

Sewell has from time to time sold the furniture of some of the upper chambers to bridal couples in the neighborhood. The bar is still open, and the parlor door says PARLOUR in tall black letters. Now and then a passing drover looks in at that lonely bar-room, where a high-shouldered bottle of Santa Cruz rum ogles with a peculiarly knowing air a shriveled lemon on a shelf; now and then a farmer rides across country to talk crops and stock and take a friendly glass with Tobias; and now and then a circus caravan with speckled ponies, or a menagerie with a soggy elephant, halts under the swinging sign, on which there is a dim mail-coach with four phantomish horses driven by a portly gentleman whose head has been washed off by the rain. Other customers there are none, except that one regular boarder whom I have mentioned.

If misery makes a man acquainted with strange bed-fellows, it is equally certain that the profession of surveyor and civil engineer often takes one into undreamed-of localities. I had never heard of Greenton until my duties sent me there, and kept me there two weeks in the dreariest season of the year. I do not think I would, of my own volition, have selected Greenton for a fortnight's sojourn at any time; but now the business is over, I shall never regret the circumstances that made me the guest of Tobias Sewell, and brought me into intimate relations with Miss Mehetabel's Son.

It was a black October night in the year of grace 1872, that discovered me standing in front of the old tavern at the Corners. Though the ten miles' ride from K—— had been depressing, especially the last five miles, on account of the cold autumnal rain that had set in, I felt a pang of regret on hearing the rickety open wagon turn round in the road and roll off in the darkness. There were no lights visible anywhere, and only for the big, shapeless mass of something in front of me, which the driver had said was the hotel, I should have fancied that I had been set down by the roadside. I was wet to the skin and in no amiable humor; and not being able to find bell-pull or knocker, or even a door, I belabored the side of the house with my heavy walking-stick. In a minute or two I saw a light flickering somewhere aloft, then I heard the sound of a window opening, followed by an exclamation of disgust as a blast of wind extinguished the candle which had given me an instantaneous picture *en silhouette* of a man leaning out of a casement.

"I say, what do you want, down there?" inquired an unprepossessing voice.

"I want to come in; I want a supper, and a bed, and numberless things."

"This isn't no time of night to go rousing honest folks out of their sleep. Who are you, anyway?"

The question, superficially considered, was a very simple one, and I, of all people in the world, ought to have been able to answer it off-hand; but it staggered me. Strangely enough, there came drifting across my memory the lettering on the back of a metaphysical work which I had seen years before on a shelf in the Astor Library. Owing to an unpremeditatedly funny collocation of title and author, the lettering read as follows:—"Who am I? Jones." Evidently it had puzzled Jones to know who he was, or he wouldn't have written a book about it, and come to so lame and impotent a conclusion. It certainly puzzled me at that instant to define my identity. "Thirty years ago," I reflected, "I was nothing; fifty years hence I shall be nothing again, humanly speaking. In the mean time, who am I, sure enough?" It had never before occurred to me what an indefinite article I was. I wish it had not occurred to me then. Standing there in the rain and darkness, I wrestled vainly with the problem, and was constrained to fall back upon a Yankee expedient.

"Isn't this a hotel?" I asked finally.

"Well, it is a sort of hotel," said the voice, doubtfully. My hesitation and prevarication had apparently not inspired my interlocutor with confidence in me.

"Then let me in. I have just driven over from K—— in this infernal rain. I am wet through and through."

"But what do you want here, at the Corners? What's your business? People don't come here, leastways in the middle of the night."

"It isn't in the middle of the night," I returned, incensed. "I come on business connected with the new road. I'm the superintendent of the works."

"Oh!"

"And if you don't open the door at once, I'll raise the whole neighborhood—and then go to the other hotel."

When I said that, I supposed Greenton was a village with a population of at least three or four thousand, and was wondering vaguely at the absence of lights and other signs of human habitation. Surely, I thought, all the people cannot be abed and asleep at half past ten o'clock: perhaps I am in the business section of the town, among the shops.

"You jest wait," said the voice above.

This request was not devoid of a certain accent of menace, and I braced myself for a sortie on the part of the besieged, if he had any such hostile intent. Presently a door opened at the very place where I least expected a door, at the farther end of the building, in fact, and a man in his shirt-sleeves, shielding a candle with his left hand, appeared on the threshold. I passed quickly into the house, with Mr. Tobias Sewell (for this was Mr. Sewell) at my heels, and found myself in a long, low-studded bar-room.

There were two chairs drawn up before the hearth, on which a huge hemlock back-log was still smoldering, and on the unpainted deal counter contiguous stood two cloudy glasses with bits of lemon-peel in the bottom, hinting at recent libations. Against the discolored wall over the bar hung a yellowed handbill, in a warped frame, announcing that "the Next Annual N. H. Agricultural Fair" would take place on the 10th of September, 1841. There was no other furniture or decoration in this dismal apartment, except the cobwebs which festooned the ceiling, hanging down here and there like stalactites.

Mr. Sewell set the candlestick on the mantel-shelf, and threw some pine-knots on the fire, which immediately broke into a blaze, and showed him to be a lank, narrow-chested man, past sixty, with sparse, steel-gray hair, and small, deep-set eyes, perfectly round, like a fish's, and of no particular color. His chief personal characteristics seemed to be too much feet and not enough teeth. His sharply cut, but rather simple face, as he turned it towards me, wore a look of interrogation. I replied to his mute inquiry by taking out my pocket-book and handing him my business-card, which he held up to the candle and perused with great deliberation.

"You're a civil engineer, are you?" he said, displaying his gums, which gave his countenance an expression of almost infantile innocence. He made no further audible remark, but mumbled between his thin lips something which an imaginative person might have construed into, "If you're a civil engineer, I'll be blessed if I wouldn't like to see an uncivil one!"

Mr. Sewell's growl, however, was worse than his bite, — owing to his lack of teeth, probably — for he very good-naturedly set himself to work preparing supper for me. After a slice of cold ham, and a warm punch, to which my chilled condition gave a grateful flavor, I went to bed in a distant chamber in a most amiable mood, feeling satisfied that Jones was a donkey to bother himself about his identity.

When I awoke, the sun was several hours high. My bed faced a window, and by raising myself on one elbow I could look out on what I expected would be the main street. To my astonishment I beheld a lonely country road winding up a sterile hill and disappearing over the ridge. In a cornfield at the right of the road was a small private graveyard, inclosed by a crumbling stone wall with a red gate. The only thing suggestive of life was this little corner lot occupied by death. I got out of bed and went to the other window. There I had an uninterrupted view of twelve miles of open landscape, with Mount Agamenticus in the purple distance. Not a house or a spire in sight. «Well,» I exclaimed, «Greenton doesn't appear to be a very closely packed metropolis!» That rival hotel with which I had threatened Mr. Sewell overnight was not a deadly weapon, looking at it by daylight. «By Jove!» I reflected, «maybe I'm in the wrong place.» But there, tacked against a panel of the bedroom door, was a faded time-table dated Greenton, August 1st, 1839.

I smiled all the time I was dressing, and went smiling downstairs, where I found Mr. Sewell, assisted by one of the fair sex in the first bloom of her eightieth year, serving breakfast for me on a small table — in the bar-room!

«I overslept myself this morning,» I remarked apologetically, «and I see that I am putting you to some trouble. In future, if you will have me called, I will take my meals at the usual *table d'hôte.*»

«At the what?» said Mr. Sewell.

«I mean with the other boarders.»

Mr. Sewell paused in the act of lifting a chop from the fire, and, resting the point of his fork against the woodwork of the mantel-piece, grinned from ear to ear.

«Bless you! there isn't any other boarders. There hasn't been anybody put up here sence — let me see — sence father-in-law died, and that was in the fall of '40. To be sure, there's Silas; *he*'s a regular boarder: but I don't count him.»

Mr. Sewell then explained how the tavern had lost its custom when the old stage line was broken up by the railroad. The introduction of steam was, in Mr. Sewell's estimation, a fatal error. « Jest killed local business. Carried it off, I'm darned if I know where. The whole country has been sort o' retrograding ever sence steam was invented.»

« You spoke of having one boarder,» I said.

« Silas? Yes; he come here the summer 'Tilda died—she that was 'Tilda Bayley—and he's here yet, going on thirteen year. He couldn't live any longer with the old man. Between you and I, old Clem Jaffrey, Silas's father, was a hard nut. Yes,» said Mr. Sewell, crooking his elbow in inimitable pantomime, « altogether too often. Found dead in the road hugging a three-gallon demijohn. *Habeas corpus* in the barn,» added Mr. Sewell, intending, I presume, to intimate that a *post-mortem* examination had been deemed necessary. « Silas,» he resumed, in that respectful tone which one should always adopt when speaking of capital, « is a man of considerable property; lives on his interest, and keeps a hoss and shay. He's a great scholar, too, Silas: takes all the pe-ri-odicals and the Police Gazette regular.»

Mr. Sewell was turning over a third chop, when the door opened and a stoutish, middle-aged little gentleman, clad in deep black, stepped into the room.

« Silas Jaffrey,» said Mr. Sewell, with a comprehensive sweep of his arm, picking up me and the new-comer on one fork, so to speak. « Be acquainted!»

Mr. Jaffrey advanced briskly, and gave me his hand with unlooked-for cordiality. He was a dapper little man, with a head as round and nearly as bald as an orange, and not unlike an orange in complexion, either; he had twinkling gray eyes and a pronounced Roman nose, the numerous freckles upon which were deepened by his funereal dress-coat and trousers. He reminded me of Alfred de Musset's blackbird, which, with its yellow beak and sombre plumage, looked like an undertaker eating an omelet.

« Silas will take care of you,» said Mr. Sewell, taking down his hat from a peg behind the door. « I've got the cattle to look after. Tell him if you want anything.»

While I ate my breakfast, Mr. Jaffrey hopped up and down the narrow bar-room and chirped away as blithely as a bird on a cherry-bough, occasionally ruffling with his fingers a slight fringe of auburn hair which stood up pertly round his head and seemed to possess a luminous quality of its own.

"Don't I find it a little slow up here at the Corners? Not at all, my dear sir. I am in the thick of life up here. So many interesting things going on all over the world—inventions, discoveries, spirits, railroad disasters, mysterious homicides. Poets, murderers, musicians, statesmen, distinguished travelers, prodigies of all kinds turning up everywhere. Very few events or persons escape me. I take six daily city papers, thirteen weekly journals, all the monthly magazines, and two quarterlies. I could not get along with less. I couldn't if you asked me. I never feel lonely. How can I, being on intimate terms, as it were, with thousands and thousands of people? There's that young woman out West. What an entertaining creature *she* is!—now in Missouri, now in Indiana, and now in Minnesota, always on the go, and all the time shedding needles from various parts of her body as if she really enjoyed it! Then there's that versatile patriarch who walks hundreds of miles and saws thousands of feet of wood, before breakfast, and shows no signs of giving out. Then there's that remarkable, one may say that historical colored woman who knew Benjamin Franklin, and fought at the battle of Bunk—no, it is the old negro man who fought at Bunker Hill, a mere infant, of course, at that period. Really, now, it is quite curious to observe how that venerable female slave—formerly an African princess—is repeatedly dying in her hundred and eleventh year, and coming to life again punctually every six months in the small-type paragraphs. Are you aware, sir, that within the last twelve years no fewer than two hundred and eighty-seven of General Washington's colored coachmen have died?"

For the soul of me I could not tell whether this quaint little gentleman was chaffing me or not. I laid down my knife and fork, and stared at him.

"Then there are the mathematicians!" he cried vivaciously, without waiting for a reply. "I take great interest in them. Hear this!" and Mr. Jaffrey drew a newspaper from a pocket in the tail of his coat, and read as follows:—"*It has been estimated that if all the candles manufactured by this eminent firm* (*Stearine & Co.*) *were placed end to end, they would reach 2 and 7-8 times around the globe.* Of course," continued Mr. Jaffrey, folding up the journal reflectively, "abstruse calculations of this kind are not, perhaps, of vital importance, but they indicate the intellectual activity of the age. Seriously, now," he said, halting in front of the table, « what with books and papers and drives about the country, I do not find the days too long, though I seldom see any one, except when I go over to K—— for my mail. Existence may be very full to a man who stands a little aside from the tumult and watches it with philosophic eye. Possibly he may see more of the battle than those who are in the midst of the action. Once I was struggling with the crowd, as eager and undaunted as the best; perhaps I should have been struggling still. Indeed, I know my life would have been very different now if I had married Mehetabel—if I had married Mehetabel.»

His vivacity was gone, a sudden cloud had come over his bright face, his figure seemed to have collapsed, the light seemed to have faded out of his hair. With a shuffling step, the very antithesis of his brisk, elastic tread, he turned to the door and passed into the road.

«Well,» I said to myself, «if Greenton had forty thousand inhabitants, it couldn't turn out a more astonishing old party than that!»

II

THE CASE OF SILAS JAFFREY

A MAN with a passion for *bric-à-brac* is always stumbling over antique bronzes, intaglios, mosaics, and daggers of the time of Benvenuto Cellini; the bibliophile finds creamy vellum folios and rare Alduses and Elzevirs waiting for him at unsuspected bookstalls; the numismatist has but to stretch forth his palm to have priceless coins drop into it. My own weakness is odd people, and I am constantly encountering them. It was plain that I had unearthed a couple of very queer specimens at Bayley's Four-Corners. I saw that a fortnight afforded me too brief an opportunity to develop the richness of both, and I resolved to devote my spare time to Mr. Jaffrey alone, instinctively recognizing in him an unfamiliar species. My professional work in the vicinity of Greenton left my evenings and occasionally an afternoon unoccupied; these intervals I purposed to employ in studying and classifying my fellow-boarder. It was necessary, as a preliminary step, to learn something of his previous history, and to this end I addressed myself to Mr. Sewell that same night.

«I do not want to seem inquisitive,» I said to the landlord, as he was fastening up the bar, which, by the way, was the *salle à manger* and general sitting-room—«I do not want to seem inquisitive, but your friend Mr. Jaffrey dropped a remark this morning at breakfast which—which was not altogether clear to me.»

«About Mehetabel?» asked Mr. Sewell, uneasily.

«Yes.»

«Well, I wish he wouldn't!»

«He was friendly enough in the course of conversation to hint to me that he had not married the young woman, and seemed to regret it.»

«No, he didn't marry Mehetabel.»

«May I inquire *why* he didn't marry Mehetabel?»

«Never asked her. Might have married the girl forty times. Old Elkins's daughter, over at K——. She'd have had him quick enough. Seven years, off and on, he kept company with Mehetabel, and then she died.»

«And he never asked her?»

«He shilly-shallied. Perhaps he didn't think of it. When she was dead and gone, then Silas was struck all of a heap—and that's all about it.»

Obviously Mr. Sewell did not intend to tell me anything more, and obviously there was more to tell. The topic was plainly disagreeable to him for some reason or other, and that unknown reason of course piqued my curiosity.

As I was absent from dinner and supper that day, I did not meet Mr. Jaffrey again until the following morning at breakfast. He had recovered his bird-like manner, and was full of a mysterious assassination that had just taken place in New York, all the thrilling details of which were at his fingers' ends. It was at once comical and sad to see this harmless old gentleman, with his naïve, benevolent countenance, and his thin hair flaming up in a semicircle, like the footlights at a theatre, reveling in the intricacies of the unmentionable deed.

«You come up to my room to-night,» he cried, with horrid glee, «and I'll give you my theory of the murder. I'll make it as clear as day to you that it was the detective himself who fired the three pistol-shots.»

It was not so much the desire to have this point elucidated as to make a closer study of Mr. Jaffrey that led me to accept his invitation. Mr. Jaffrey's bedroom was in an L of the building, and was in no way noticeable except for the numerous files of newspapers neatly arranged against the blank spaces of the walls, and a huge pile of old magazines which stood in one corner, reaching nearly up to the ceiling, and threatening to topple over each instant, like the Leaning Tower at Pisa. There were green paper shades at the windows, some faded chintz valances about the bed, and two or three easy-chairs covered with chintz. On a black-walnut shelf between the windows lay a choice collection of meerschaum and brierwood pipes.

Filling one of the chocolate-colored bowls for me and another for himself, Mr. Jaffrey began prattling; but not about the murder, which appeared to have flown out of his mind. In fact, I do not remember that the topic was even touched upon, either then or afterwards.

"Cozy nest this," said Mr. Jaffrey, glancing complacently over the apartment. "What is more cheerful, now, in the fall of the year, than an open wood-fire? Do you hear those little chirps and twitters coming out of that piece of apple-wood? Those are the ghosts of the robins and bluebirds that sang upon the bough when it was in blossom last spring. In summer whole flocks of them come fluttering about the fruit-trees under the window: so I have singing birds all the year round. I take it very easy here, I can tell you, summer and winter. Not much society. Tobias is not, perhaps, what one would term a great intellectual force, but he means well. He's a realist — believes in coming down to what he calls 'the hardpan'; but his heart is in the right place, and he's very kind to me. The wisest thing I ever did in my life was to sell out my grain business over at K——, thirteen years ago, and settle down at the Corners. When a man has made a competency, what does he want more? Besides, at that time an event occurred which destroyed any ambition I may have had. Mehetabel died."

"The lady you were engaged to?"

"N-o, not precisely engaged. I think it was quite understood between us, though nothing had been said on the subject. Typhoid," added Mr. Jaffrey, in a low voice.

For several minutes he smoked in silence, a vague, troubled look playing over his countenance. Presently this passed away, and he fixed his gray eyes speculatively upon my face.

"If I had married Mehetabel," said Mr. Jaffrey, slowly, and then he hesitated. I blew a ring of smoke into the air, and, resting my pipe on my knee, dropped into an attitude of attention. "If I had married Mehetabel, you know, we should have had—ahem!—a family."

"Very likely," I assented, vastly amused at this unexpected turn.

"A Boy!" exclaimed Mr. Jaffrey, explosively.

"By all means, certainly, a son."

"Great trouble about naming the boy. Mehetabel's family want him named Elkanah Elkins, after her grandfather; I want him named Andrew Jackson. We compromise by christening him Elkanah Elkins Andrew Jackson Jaffrey. Rather a long name for such a short little fellow," said Mr. Jaffrey, musingly.

"Andy isn't a bad nickname," I suggested.

"Not at all. We call him Andy, in the family. Somewhat fractious at first—colic and things. I suppose it is right, or it wouldn't be so; but the usefulness of measles, mumps, croup, whooping-cough, scarlatina, and fits is not clear to the parental eye. I wish Andy would be a model infant, and dodge the whole lot."

This suppositious child, born within the last few minutes, was plainly assuming the proportions of a reality to Mr. Jaffrey. I began to feel a little uncomfortable. I am, as I have said, a civil engineer, and it is not strictly in my line to assist at the births of infants, imaginary or otherwise. I pulled away vigorously at the pipe, and said nothing.

"What large blue eyes he has," resumed Mr. Jaffrey, after a pause; "just like Hetty's; and the fair hair, too, like hers. How oddly certain distinctive features are handed down in families! Sometimes a mouth, sometimes a turn of the eyebrow. Wicked little boys over at K—— have now and then derisively advised me to follow my nose. It would be an interesting thing to do. I should find my nose flying about the world, turning up unexpectedly here and there, dodging this branch of the family and reappearing in that, now jumping over one great-grandchild to fasten itself upon another, and never losing its individuality. Look at Andy. There's Elkanah Elkins's chin to the life. Andy's chin is probably older than the Pyramids. Poor little thing," he cried, with sudden indescribable tenderness, "to lose his mother so early!" And Mr.

Jaffrey's head sunk upon his breast, and his shoulders slanted forward, as if he were actually bending over the cradle of the child. The whole gesture and attitude was so natural that it startled me. The pipe slipped from my fingers and fell to the floor.

"Hush!" whispered Mr. Jaffrey, with a deprecating motion of his hand. "Andy's asleep!"

He rose softly from the chair, and walking across the room on tiptoe, drew down the shade at the window through which the moonlight was streaming. Then he returned to his seat, and remained gazing with half-closed eyes into the dropping embers.

I refilled my pipe and smoked in profound silence, wondering what would come next. But nothing came next. Mr. Jaffrey had fallen into so brown a study that, a quarter of an hour afterwards, when I wished him good-night and withdrew, I do not think he noticed my departure.

I am not what is called a man of imagination; it is my habit to exclude most things not capable of mathematical demonstration: but I am not without a certain psychological insight, and I think I understood Mr. Jaffrey's case. I could easily understand how a man with an unhealthy, sensitive nature, overwhelmed by sudden calamity, might take refuge in some forlorn place like this old tavern, and dream his life away. To such a man — brooding forever on what might have been, and dwelling wholly in the realm of his fancies — the actual world might indeed become as a dream, and nothing seem real but his illusions. I dare say that thirteen years of Bayley's Four-Corners would have its effect upon me; though instead of conjuring up golden-haired children of the Madonna, I should probably see gnomes and kobolds, and goblins engaged in hoisting false signals and misplacing switches for midnight express trains.

"No doubt," I said to myself that night, as I lay in bed, thinking over the matter, "this once possible but now impossible child is a great comfort to the old gentleman, — a greater comfort, perhaps, than a real son would be. Maybe Andy will vanish with the shades and mists of night, he's such an unsubstantial infant; but if he doesn't, and Mr. Jaffrey finds pleasure in talking to me about his son, I shall humor the old fellow. It wouldn't be a Christian act to knock over his harmless fancy."

I was very impatient to see if Mr. Jaffrey's illusion would stand the test of daylight. It did. Elkanah Elkins Andrew Jackson Jaffrey was, so to speak, alive and kicking the next morning. On taking his seat at the breakfast-table, Mr. Jaffrey whispered to me that Andy had had a comfortable night.

«Silas!» said Mr. Sewell, sharply, «what are you whispering about?»

Mr. Sewell was in an ill humor; perhaps he was jealous because I had passed the evening in Mr. Jaffrey's room; but surely Mr. Sewell could not expect his boarders to go to bed at eight o'clock every night, as he did. From time to time during the meal Mr. Sewell regarded me unkindly out of the corner of his eye, and in helping me to the parsnips he poniarded them with quite a suggestive air. All this, however, did not prevent me from repairing to the door of Mr. Jaffrey's snuggery when night came.

«Well, Mr. Jaffrey, how's Andy this evening?»

«Got a tooth!» cried Mr. Jaffrey, vivaciously.

«No!»

«Yes, he has! Just through. Give the nurse a silver dollar. Standing reward for first tooth.»

It was on the tip of my tongue to express surprise that an infant a day old should cut a tooth, when I suddenly recollected that Richard III. was born with teeth. Feeling myself to be on unfamiliar ground, I suppressed my criticism. It was well I did so, for in the next breath I was advised that half a year had elapsed since the previous evening.

«Andy's had a hard six months of it,» said Mr. Jaffrey, with the well-known narrative air of fathers. «We've brought him up by hand. His grandfather, by the way, was brought up by the bottle—» and brought down by it, too, I added mentally, recalling Mr. Sewell's account of the old gentleman's tragic end.

Mr. Jaffrey then went on to give me a history of Andy's first six months, omitting no detail however insignificant or irrelevant. This history I would in turn inflict upon the reader, if I were only certain that he is one of those dreadful parents who, under the ægis of friendship, bore you at a street-corner with that remarkable thing which Freddy said the other day, and insist on singing to you, at an evening party, the Iliad of Tommy's woes.

But to inflict this *enfantillage* upon the unmarried reader would be an act of wanton cruelty. So I pass over that part of Andy's biography, and for the same reason make no record of the next four or five interviews I had with Mr. Jaffrey. It will be sufficient to state that Andy glided from extreme infancy to early youth with astonishing celerity — at the rate of one year per night, if I remember correctly; and — must I confess it? — before the week came to an end, this invisible hobgoblin of a boy was only little less of a reality to me than to Mr. Jaffrey.

At first I had lent myself to the old dreamer's whim with a keen perception of the humor of the thing; but by and by I found that I was talking and thinking of Miss Mehetabel's son as though he were a veritable personage. Mr. Jaffrey spoke of the child with such an air of conviction! — as if Andy were playing among his toys in the next room, or making mud-pies down in the yard. In these conversations, it should be observed, the child was never supposed to be present, except on that single occasion when Mr. Jaffrey leaned over the cradle. After one of our *séances* I would lie awake until the small hours, thinking of the boy, and then fall asleep only to have indigestible dreams about him. Through the day, and sometimes in the midst of complicated calculations, I would catch myself wondering what Andy was up to now! There was no shaking him off; he became an inseparable nightmare to me; and I felt that if I remained much longer at Bayley's Four-Corners I should turn into just such another bald-headed, mild-eyed visionary as Silas Jaffrey.

Then the tavern was a grewsome old shell any way, full of unaccountable noises after dark — rustlings of garments along unfrequented passages, and stealthy footfalls in unoccupied chambers overhead. I never knew of an old house without these mysterious noises. Next to my bedroom was a musty, dismantled apartment, in one corner of which, leaning against the wainscot, was a crippled mangle, with its iron crank tilted in the air like the elbow of the late Mr. Clem Jaffrey. Sometimes,

> «In the dead vast and middle of the night,»

I used to hear sounds as if some one were turning that rusty crank on the sly. This occurred only on particularly cold nights, and I conceived the uncomfortable idea that it was the thin family ghosts, from the neglected graveyard in the cornfield, keeping themselves warm by running each other through the mangle. There was a haunted air about the whole place that made it easy for me to believe in the existence of a phantasm like Miss Mehetabel's son, who, after all, was less unearthly than Mr. Jaffrey himself, and seemed more properly an inhabitant of this globe than the toothless ogre who kept the inn, not to mention the silent Witch of Endor that cooked our meals for us over the bar-room fire.

In spite of the scowls and winks bestowed upon me by Mr. Sewell, who let slip no opportunity to testify his disapprobation of the intimacy, Mr. Jaffrey and I spent all our evenings together — those long autumnal evenings, through the length of which he talked about the boy, laying out his path in life and hedging the path with roses. He should be sent to the High School at Portsmouth, and then to college; he should be educated like a gentleman, Andy.

«When the old man dies,» remarked Mr. Jaffrey one night, rubbing his hands gleefully, as if it were a great joke, «Andy will find that the old man has left him a pretty plum.»

«What do you think of having Andy enter West Point, when he's old enough?» said Mr. Jaffrey on another occasion. «He needn't necessarily go into the army when he graduates; he can become a civil engineer.»

This was a stroke of flattery so delicate and indirect that I could accept it without immodesty.

There had lately sprung up on the corner of Mr. Jaffrey's bureau a small tin house, Gothic in architecture and pink in color, with a slit in the roof, and the word Bank painted on one façade. Several times in the course of an evening Mr. Jaffrey would rise from his chair without interrupting the conversation, and gravely drop a nickel into the scuttle of the bank. It was pleasant to observe the solemnity of his countenance as he approached the edifice, and the air of triumph with which he resumed his seat by the fireplace. One night I missed the tin bank. It had disappeared, deposits and all, like a real bank. Evidently there had been a defalcation on rather a large scale. I strongly suspected that Mr. Sewell was at the bottom of it, but my suspicion was not shared by Mr. Jaffrey, who, remarking my glance at the bureau, became suddenly depressed.

« I'm afraid,» he said, « that I have failed to instill into Andrew those principles of integrity which — which — » and the old gentleman quite broke down.

Andy was now eight or nine years old, and for some time past, if the truth must be told, had given Mr. Jaffrey no inconsiderable trouble; what with his impishness and his illnesses, the boy led the pair of us a lively dance. I shall not soon forget the anxiety of Mr. Jaffrey the night Andy had the scarlet-fever — an anxiety which so infected me that I actually returned to the tavern the following afternoon earlier than usual, dreading to hear that the little spectre was dead, and greatly relieved on meeting Mr. Jaffrey at the door-step with his face wreathed in smiles. When I spoke to him of Andy, I was made aware that I was inquiring into a case of scarlet-fever that had occurred the year before!

It was at this time, towards the end of my second week at Greenton, that I noticed what was probably not a new trait — Mr. Jaffrey's curious sensitiveness to atmospherical changes. He was as sensitive as a barometer. The approach of a storm sent his mercury down instantly. When the weather was fair he was hopeful and sunny, and Andy's prospects were brilliant. When the weather was overcast and threatening he grew restless and despondent, and was afraid that the boy was not going to turn out well.

On the Saturday previous to my departure, which had been fixed for Monday, it rained heavily all the afternoon, and that night Mr. Jaffrey was in an unusually excitable and unhappy frame of mind. His mercury was very low indeed.

« That boy is going to the dogs just as fast as he can go,» said Mr. Jaffrey, with a woeful face. « I can't do anything with him.»

« He'll come out all right, Mr. Jaffrey. Boys will be boys. I would not give a snap for a lad without animal spirits.»

« But animal spirits,» said Mr. Jaffrey sententiously, « shouldn't saw off the legs of the piano in Tobias's best parlor. I don't know what Tobias will say when he finds it out.»

« What! has Andy sawed off the legs of the old spinet ?» I returned, laughing.

« Worse than that.»

« Played upon it, then!»

« No, sir. He has lied to me!»

«I can't believe that of Andy.»

«Lied to me, sir,» repeated Mr. Jaffrey, severely. «He pledged me his word of honor that he would give over his climbing. The way that boy climbs sends a chill down my spine. This morning, notwithstanding his solemn promise, he shinned up the lightning-rod attached to the extension, and sat astride the ridge-pole. I saw him, and he denied it! When a boy you have caressed and indulged and lavished pocket-money on lies to you and *will* climb, then there's nothing more to be said. He's a lost child.»

«You take too dark a view of it, Mr. Jaffrey. Training and education are bound to tell in the end, and he has been well brought up.»

«But I didn't bring him up on a lightning-rod, did I? If he is ever going to know how to behave, he ought to know now. To-morrow he will be eleven years old.»

The reflection came to me that if Andy had not been brought up by the rod, he had certainly been brought up by the lightning. He was eleven years old in two weeks!

I essayed, with that perspicacious wisdom which seems to be the peculiar property of bachelors and elderly maiden ladies, to tranquillize Mr. Jaffrey's mind, and to give him some practical hints on the management of youth.

«Spank him,» I suggested at last.

«I will!» said the old gentleman.

«And you'd better do it at once!» I added, as it flashed upon me that in six months Andy would be a hundred and forty-three years old!—an age at which parental discipline would have to be relaxed.

The next morning, Sunday, the rain came down as if determined to drive the quicksilver entirely out of my poor friend. Mr. Jaffrey sat bolt upright at the breakfast-table, looking as woe-begone as a bust of Dante, and retired to his chamber the moment the meal was finished. As the day advanced, the wind veered round to the northeast, and settled itself down to work. It was not pleasant to think, and I tried not to think, what Mr. Jaffrey's condition would be if the weather did not mend its manners by noon; but so far from clearing off at noon, the storm increased in violence, and as night set in, the wind whistled in a spiteful falsetto key, and the rain lashed the old tavern as if it were a balky horse that refused to move on.

The windows rattled in the worm-eaten frames, and the doors of remote rooms, where nobody ever went, slammed to in the maddest way. Now and then the tornado, sweeping down the side of Mount Agamenticus, bowled across the open country, and struck the ancient hostelry point-blank.

Mr. Jaffrey did not appear at supper. I knew that he was expecting me to come to his room as usual, and I turned over in my mind a dozen plans to evade seeing him that night. The landlord sat at the opposite side of the chimney-place, with his eye upon me. I fancy he was aware of the effect of this storm on his other boarder; for at intervals, as the wind hurled itself against the exposed gable, threatening to burst in the windows, Mr. Sewell tipped me an atrocious wink, and displayed his gums in a way he had not done since the morning after my arrival at Greenton. I wondered if he suspected anything about Andy. There had been odd times during the past week when I felt convinced that the existence of Miss Mehetabel's son was no secret to Mr. Sewell.

In deference to the gale, the landlord sat up half an hour later than was his custom. At half-past eight he went to bed, remarking that he thought the old pile would stand till morning.

He had been absent only a few minutes when I heard a rustling at the door. I looked up, and beheld Mr. Jaffrey standing on the threshold, with his dress in disorder, his scant hair flying, and the wildest expression on his face.

« He's gone! » cried Mr. Jaffrey.

« Who? Sewell? Yes, he just went to bed. »

« No, not Tobias — the boy! »

« What, run away? »

« No — he is dead! He has fallen from a step-ladder in the red chamber and broken his neck! »

Mr. Jaffrey threw up his hands with a gesture of despair, and disappeared. I followed him through the hall, saw him go into his own apartment, and heard the bolt of the door drawn to. Then I returned to the bar-room, and sat for an hour or two in the ruddy glow of the fire, brooding over the strange experience of the last fortnight.

On my way to bed I paused at Mr. Jaffrey's door, and in a lull of the storm, the measured respiration within told me that the old gentleman was sleeping peacefully.

Slumber was coy with me that night. I lay listening to the soughing of the wind, and thinking of Mr. Jaffrey's illusion. It had amused me at first with its grotesqueness; but now the poor little phantom was dead, I was conscious that there had been something pathetic in it all along. Shortly after midnight the wind sunk down, coming and going fainter and fainter, floating around the eaves of the tavern with an undulating, murmurous sound, as if it were turning itself into soft wings to bear away the spirit of a little child.

Perhaps nothing that happened during my stay at Bayley's Four-Corners took me so completely by surprise as Mr. Jaffrey's radiant countenance the next morning. The morning itself was not fresher or sunnier. His round face literally shone with geniality and happiness. His eyes twinkled like diamonds, and the magnetic light of his hair was turned on full. He came into my room while I was packing my valise. He chirped, and prattled, and caroled, and was sorry I was going away — but never a word about Andy. However, the boy had probably been dead several years then!

The open wagon that was to carry me to the station stood at the door; Mr. Sewell was placing my case of instruments under the seat, and Mr. Jaffrey had gone up to his room to get me a certain newspaper containing an account of a remarkable shipwreck on the Auckland Islands. I took the opportunity to thank Mr. Sewell for his courtesies to me, and to express my regret at leaving him and Mr. Jaffrey.

«I have become very much attached to Mr. Jaffrey,» I said; «he is a most interesting person; but that hypothetical boy of his, that son of Miss Mehetabel's — »

«Yes, I know!» interrupted Mr. Sewell, testily. «Fell off a step-ladder and broke his dratted neck. Eleven year old, wasn't he? Always does, jest at that point. Next week Silas will begin the whole thing over again, if he can get anybody to listen to him.»

«I see. Our amiable friend is a little queer on that subject.»

Mr. Sewell glanced cautiously over his shoulder, and tapping himself significantly on the forehead, said in a low voice,—

«Room To Let — Unfurnished!»

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ALEARDO ALEARDI

(1812–1878)

The Italian patriot and poet, Aleardo Aleardi, was born in the village of San Giorgio, near Verona, on November 4th, 1812. He passed his boyhood on his father's farm, amid the grand scenery of the valley of the Adige, which deeply impressed itself on his youthful imagination and left its traces in all his verse. He went to school at Verona, where for his dullness he was nicknamed the «mole,» and afterwards he passed on to the University of Padua to study law, apparently to please his father, for in the charming autobiography prefixed to his collected poems he quotes his father as saying:—«My son, be not enamored of this coquette, Poesy; for with all her airs of a great lady, she will play thee some trick of a faithless grisette. Choose a good companion, as one might say, for instance the law: and thou wilt found a family; wilt partake of God's bounties; wilt be content in life, and die quietly and happily.» In addition to satisfying his father, the young poet also wrote at Padua his first political poems. And this brought him into slight conflict with the authorities. He practiced law for a short time at Verona, and wrote his first long poem, 'Arnaldo,' published in 1842, which was very favorably received. When six years later the new Venetian republic came into being, Aleardi was sent to represent its interests at Paris. The speedy overthrow of the new State brought the young ambassador home again, and for the next ten years he worked for Italian unity and freedom. He was twice imprisoned, at Mantua in 1852, and again in 1859 at Verona, where he died April 17th, 1878.

Like most of the Italian poets of this century, Aleardi found his chief inspiration in the exciting events that marked the struggle of Italy for independence, and his best work antedated the peace of Villafranca. His first serious effort was 'Le Prime Storie' (The Primal Histories), written in 1845. In this he traces the story of the human race from the creation through the Scriptural, classical, and feudal periods down to the present century, and closes with foreshadowings of a peaceful and happy future. It is picturesque, full of lofty imagery and brilliant descriptive passages.

'Una Ora della mia Giovinezza' (An Hour of My Youth: 1858) recounts many of his youthful trials and disappointments as a patriot. Like the 'Primal Histories,' this poem is largely contemplative and philosophical, and shines by the same splendid diction and luxurious imagery; but it is less wide-reaching in its interests and more specific in its appeal to his own countrymen. And from this time onward the patriotic qualities in Aleardi's poetry predominate, and his themes become more and more exclusively Italian. The ‹Monte Circello› sings the glories and events of the Italian land and history, and successfully presents many facts of science in poetic form, while the singer passionately laments the present condition of Italy. In ‹Le Citta Italiane Marinore e Commercianti› (The Marine and Commercial Cities of Italy) the story of the rise, flourishing, and fall of Venice, Florence, Pisa, and Genoa is recounted. His other noteworthy poems are ‹Rafaello e la Fornarina,› ‹Le Tre Fiume› (The Three Rivers), ‹Le Tre Fanciulle› (The Three Maidens: 1858), ‹I Sette Soldati› (The Seven Soldiers: 1859), and ‹Canto Politico› (Political Songs: 1862).

A slender volume of five hundred pages contains all that Aleardi has written. Yet he is one of the chief minor Italian poets of this century, because of his loftiness of purpose and felicity of expression, his tenderness of feeling, and his deep sympathies with his struggling country.

«He has,» observes Howells in his ‹Modern Italian Poets,› «in greater degree than any other Italian poet of this, or perhaps of any age, those merits which our English taste of this time demands,— quickness of feeling and brilliancy of expression. He lacks simplicity of idea, and his style is an opal which takes all lights and hues, rather than the crystal which lets the daylight colorlessly through. He is distinguished no less by the themes he selects than by the expression he gives them. In his poetry there is passion, but his subjects are usually those to which love is accessory rather than essential; and he cares better to sing of universal and national destinies as they concern individuals, than the raptures and anguishes of youthful individuals as they concern mankind.» He was original in his way; his attitude toward both the classic and the romantic schools is shown in the following passage from his autobiography, which at the same time brings out his patriotism. He says:—

> «It seemed to me strange, on the one hand, that people who, in their serious moments and in the recesses of their hearts, invoked Christ, should in the recesses of their minds, in the deep excitement of poetry, persist in invoking Apollo and Pallas Minerva. It seemed to me strange, on the other hand, that people born in Italy, with this sun, with these nights, with so many glories, so many griefs, so many hopes at home, should have the mania of singing the mists of Scandinavia, and the Sabbaths of witches, and should go mad for a gloomy and dead feudalism, which had come from the North, the highway of our misfortunes. It seemed to me, moreover, that every Art of Poetry was marvelously useless, and that certain rules were mummies embalmed by the hand of pedants. In fine, it seemed to me that there were two kinds of Art: the one, serene with an Olympic serenity, the

Art of all ages that belongs to no country; the other, more impassioned, that has its roots in one's native soil. . . . The first that of Homer, of Phidias, of Virgil, of Tasso; the other that of the Prophets, of Dante, of Shakespeare, of Byron. And I have tried to cling to this last, because I was pleased to see how these great men take the clay of their own land and their own time, and model from it a living statue, which resembles their contemporaries.»

In another interesting passage he explains that his old drawing-master had in vain pleaded with the father to make his son a painter, and he continues:—

«Not being allowed to use the pencil, I have used the pen. And precisely on this account my pen resembles too much a pencil; precisely on this account I am often too much of a naturalist, and am too fond of losing myself in minute details. I am as one who in walking goes leisurely along, and stops every minute to observe the dash of light that breaks through the trees of the woods, the insect that alights on his hand, the leaf that falls on his head, a cloud, a wave, a streak of smoke; in fine, the thousand accidents that make creation so rich, so various, so poetical, and beyond which we evermore catch glimpses of that grand mysterious something, eternal, immense, benignant, and never inhuman nor cruel, as some would have us believe, which is called God.»

The selections are from Howells's ‹Modern Italian Poets,› copyright 1887, by Harper and Brothers

COWARDS

IN THE deep circle of Siddim hast thou seen,
Under the shining skies of Palestine,
The sinister glitter of the Lake of Asphalt?
Those coasts, strewn thick with ashes of damnation,
Forever foe to every living thing,
Where rings the cry of the lost wandering bird
That on the shore of the perfidious sea
Athirsting dies,—that watery sepulchre
Of the five cities of iniquity,
Where even the tempest, when its clouds hang low,
Passes in silence, and the lightning dies,—
If thou hast seen them, bitterly hath been
Thy heart wrung with the misery and despair
Of that dread vision!
Yet there is on earth
A woe more desperate and miserable,—
A spectacle wherein the wrath of God
Avenges Him more terribly. It is
A vain, weak people of faint-heart old men,
That, for three hundred years of dull repose,

Has lain perpetual dreamer, folded in
The ragged purple of its ancestors,
Stretching its limbs wide in its country's sun,
To warm them; drinking the soft airs of autumn
Forgetful, on the fields where its forefathers
Like lions fought! From overflowing hands,
Strew we with hellebore and poppies thick
The way.

From ‹The Primal Histories.›

THE HARVESTERS

What time in summer, sad with so much light,
The sun beats ceaselessly upon the fields;
The harvesters, as famine urges them,
Draw hitherward in thousands, and they wear
The look of those that dolorously go
In exile, and already their brown eyes
Are heavy with the poison of the air.
Here never note of amorous bird consoles
Their drooping hearts; here never the gay songs
Of their Abruzzi sound to gladden these
Pathetic hands. But taciturn they toil,
Reaping the harvests for their unknown lords;
And when the weary labor is performed,
Taciturn they retire; and not till then
Their bagpipes crown the joys of the return,
Swelling the heart with their familiar strain.
Alas! not all return, for there is one
That dying in the furrow sits, and seeks
With his last look some faithful kinsman out,
To give his life's wage, that he carry it
Unto his trembling mother, with the last
Words of her son that comes no more. And dying,
Deserted and alone, far off he hears
His comrades going, with their pipes in time,
Joyfully measuring their homeward steps.
And when in after years an orphan comes
To reap the harvest here, and feels his blade
Go quivering through the swaths of falling grain,
He weeps and thinks—haply these heavy stalks
Ripened on his unburied father's bones.

From ‹Monte Circello.›

THE DEATH OF THE YEAR

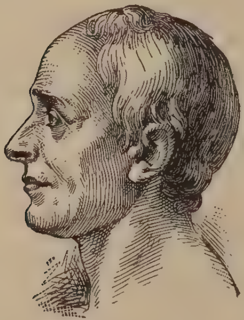
Ere yet upon the unhappy Arctic lands,
In dying autumn, Erebus descends
With the night's thousand hours, along the verge
Of the horizon, like a fugitive,
Through the long days wanders the weary sun;
And when at last under the wave is quenched
The last gleam of its golden countenance,
Interminable twilight land and sea
Discolors, and the north wind covers deep
All things in snow, as in their sepulchres
The dead are buried. In the distances
The shock of warring Cyclades of ice
Makes music as of wild and strange lament;
And up in heaven now tardily are lit
The solitary polar star and seven
Lamps of the bear. And now the warlike race
Of swans gather their hosts upon the breast
Of some far gulf, and, bidding their farewell
To the white cliffs and slender junipers,
And sea-weed bridal-beds, intone the song
Of parting, and a sad metallic clang
Send through the mists. Upon their southward way
They greet the beryl-tinted icebergs; greet
Flamy volcanoes and the seething founts
Of geysers, and the melancholy yellow
Of the Icelandic fields; and, wearying
Their lily wings amid the boreal lights,
Journey away unto the joyous shores
Of morning.

From ‹An Hour of My Youth.›

JEAN LE ROND D'ALEMBERT

(1717–1783)

Jean le Rond D'Alembert, one of the most noted of the «Encyclopedists,» a mathematician of the first order, and an eminent man of letters, was born at Paris in 1717. The unacknowleged son of the Chevalier Destouches and of Mme. de Tencin, he had been exposed on the steps of the chapel St. Jean-le-Rond, near Notre-Dame. He was named after the place where he was found; the surname of D'Alembert being added by himself in later years. He was given into the care of the wife of a glazier, who brought him up tenderly and whom he never ceased to venerate as his true mother. His anonymous father, however, partly supported him by an annual income of twelve hundred francs. He was educated at the college Mazarin, and surprised his Jansenist teachers by his brilliance and precocity. They believed him to be a second Pascal; and, doubtless to complete the analogy, drew his attention away from his theological studies to geometry. But they calculated without their host; for the young student suddenly found out his genius, and mathematics and the exact sciences henceforth became his absorbing interests. He studied successively law and medicine, but finding no satisfaction in either of these professions, with the true instincts of the scholar he chose poverty with liberty to pursue the studies he loved. He astonished the scientific world by his first published works, 'Memoir on the Integral Calculus' (1739) and 'On the Refraction of Solid Bodies' (1741); and while not yet twenty-four years old, the brilliant young mathematician was made a member of the French Academy of Sciences. In 1754 he entered the Académie Française, and eighteen years later became its perpetual secretary.



D'Alembert

D'Alembert wrote many and important works on physics and mathematics. One of these, 'Memoir on the General Cause of Winds,' carried away a prize from the Academy of Sciences of Berlin, in 1746, and its dedication to Frederick II. of Prussia won him the friendship of that monarch. But his claims to a place in French literature, leaving aside his eulogies on members of the French

Academy deceased between 1700 and 1772, are based chiefly on his writings in connection with the 'Encyclopédie.' Associated with Diderot in this vast enterprise, he was at first, because of his eminent position in the scientific world, its director and official head. He contributed a large number of scientific and philosophic articles, and took entire charge of the revising of the mathematical division. His most noteworthy contribution, however, is the 'Preliminary Discourse,' prefixed as a general introduction and explanation of the work. In this he traced with wonderful clearness and logical precision the successive steps of the human mind in its search after knowledge, and basing his conclusion on the historical evolution of the race, he sketched in broad outlines the development of the sciences and arts. In 1758 he withdrew from the active direction of the 'Encyclopédie,' that he might free himself from the annoyance of governmental interference, to which the work was constantly subjected because of the skeptical tendencies it evinced. But he continued to contribute mathematical articles, with a few on other topics. One of these, on 'Geneva,' involved him in his celebrated dispute with Rousseau and other radicals in regard to Calvinism and the suppression of theatrical performances in the stronghold of Swiss orthodoxy.

His fame was spreading over Europe. Frederick the Great of Prussia repeatedly offered him the presidency of the Academy of Sciences of Berlin. But he refused, as he also declined the magnificent offer of Catherine of Russia to become tutor to her son, at a yearly salary of a hundred thousand francs. Pope Benedict XIV. honored him by recommending him to the membership of the Institute of Bologne; and the high esteem in which he was held in England is shown by the legacy of £200 left him by David Hume.

All these honors and distinctions did not affect the simplicity of his life, for during thirty years he continued to reside in the poor and incommodious quarters of his foster-mother, whom he partly supported out of his small income. Ill health at last drove him to seek better accommodations. He had formed a romantic attachment for Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse, and lived with her in the same house for years unscandaled. Her death in 1776 plunged him into profound grief. He died nine years later, on the 9th of October, 1783.

His manner was plain and at times almost rude; he had great independence of character, but also much simplicity and benevolence. With the other French deists, D'Alembert has been attacked for his religious opinions, but with injustice. He was prudent in the public expression of them, as the time necessitated; but he makes the freest statement of them in his correspondence with Voltaire. His literary and philosopic works were edited by Bassange (Paris, 1891). Condorcet, in his 'Eulogy,' gives the best account of his life and writings.

MONTESQUIEU

From the Eulogy published in the ‹Encyclopédie›

The interest which good citizens are pleased to take in the 'Encyclopédie,' and the great number of men of letters who consecrate their labors to it, authorize us to regard this work as the most proper monument to preserve the grateful sentiments of our country, and that respect which is due to the memory of those celebrated men who have done it honor. Persuaded, however, that M. de Montesquieu had a title to expect other panegyrics, and that the public grief deserved to be described by more eloquent pens, we should have paid his great memory the homage of silence, had not gratitude compelled us to speak. A benefactor to mankind by his writings, he was not less a benefactor to this work, and at least we may place a few lines at the base of his statue, as it were.

Charles de Secondat, baron of La Brède and of Montesquieu, late life-President of the Parliament of Bordeaux, member of the French Academy of Sciences, of the Royal Academy and Belles-Lettres of Prussia, and of the Royal Society of London, was born at the castle of La Brède, near Bordeaux, the 18th of January, 1689, of a noble family of Guyenne. His great-great-grandfather, John de Secondat, steward of the household to Henry the Second, King of Navarre, and afterward to Jane, daughter of that king, who married Antony of Bourbon, purchased the estate of Montesquieu for the sum of ten thousand livres, which this princess gave him by an authentic deed, as a reward for his probity and services.

Henry the Third, King of Navarre, afterward Henry the Fourth, King of France, erected the lands of Montesquieu into a barony, in favor of Jacob de Secondat, son of John, first a gentleman in ordinary of the bedchamber to this prince, and afterward colonel of the regiment of Chatillon. John Gaston de Secondat, his second son, having married a daughter of the first president of the Parliament of Bordeaux, purchased the office of perpetual president in this society. He had several children, one of whom entered the service, distinguished himself, and quitted it very early in life. This was the father of Charles de Secondat, author of the 'Spirit of Laws.' These particulars may seem superfluous in the eulogy of a philosopher who stands so little in need of ancestors; but at least we may adorn their memory with that lustre which his name reflects upon it.

The early promise of his genius was fulfilled in Charles de Secondat. He discovered very soon what he desired to be, and his father cultivated this rising genius, the object of his hope and of his tenderness. At the age of twenty, young Montesquieu had already prepared materials for the 'Spirit of Laws,' by a well-digested extract from the immense body of the civil law; as Newton had laid in early youth the foundation of his immortal works. The study of jurisprudence, however, though less dry to M. de Montesquieu than to most who attempt it, because he studied it as a philosopher, did not content him. He inquired deeply into the subjects which pertain to religion, and considered them with that wisdom, decency, and equity, which characterize his work.

A brother of his father, perpetual president of the Parliament of Bordeaux, an able judge and virtuous citizen, the oracle of his own society and of his province, having lost an only son, left his fortune and his office to M. de Montesquieu.

Some years after, in 1722, during the king's minority, his society employed him to present remonstrances upon occasion of a new impost. Placed between the throne and the people, like a respectful subject and courageous magistrate he brought the cry of the wretched to the ears of the sovereign—a cry which, being heard, obtained justice. Unfortunately, this success was momentary. Scarce was the popular voice silenced before the suppressed tax was replaced by another; but the good citizen had done his duty.

He was received the 3d of April, 1716, into the new academy of Bordeaux. A taste for music and entertainment had at first assembled its members. M. de Montesquieu believed that the talents of his friends might be better employed in physical subjects. He was persuaded that nature, worthy of being beheld everywhere, could find everywhere eyes worthy to behold her; while it was impossible to gather together, at a distance from the metropolis, distinguished writers on works of taste. He looked upon our provincial societies for belles-lettres as a shadow of literature which obscures the reality. The Duke de la Force, by a prize which he founded at Bordeaux, seconded these rational views. It was decided that a good physical experiment would be better than a weak discourse or a bad poem; and Bordeaux got an Academy of Sciences.

M. de Montesquieu, careless of reputation, wrote little. It was not till 1721, that is to say, at thirty-two years of age, that he published the 'Persian Letters.' The description of Oriental manners, real or supposed, is the least important thing in these letters. It serves merely as a pretense for a delicate satire upon our own customs and for the concealment of a serious intention. In this moving picture, Usbec chiefly exposes, with as much ease as energy, whatever among us most struck his penetrating eyes: our way of treating the silliest things seriously, and of laughing at the most important; our way of talking which is at once so blustering and so frivolous; our impatience even in the midst of pleasure itself; our prejudices and our actions that perpetually contradict our understandings; our great love of glory and respect for the idol of court favor, our little real pride; our courtiers so mean and vain; our exterior politeness to, and our real contempt of strangers; our fantastical tastes, than which there is nothing lower but the eagerness of all Europe to adopt them; our barbarous disdain for the two most respectable occupations of a citizen — commerce and magistracy; our literary disputes, so keen and so useless; our rage for writing before we think, and for judging before we understand. To this picture he opposes, in the apologue of the Troglodytes, the description of a virtuous people, become wise by misfortunes — a piece worthy of the portico. In another place, he represents philosophy, long silenced, suddenly reappearing, regaining rapidly the time which she had lost; penetrating even among the Russians at the voice of a genius which invites her; while among other people of Europe, superstition, like a thick atmosphere, prevents the all-surrounding light from reaching them. Finally, by his review of ancient and modern government, he presents us with the bud of those bright ideas since fully developed in his great work.

These different subjects, no longer novel, as when the 'Persian Letters' first appeared, will forever remain original — a merit the more real that it proceeds alone from the genius of the writer; for Usbec acquired, during his abode in France, so perfect a knowledge of our morals, and so strong a tincture of our manners, that his style makes us forget his country. This small solecism was perhaps not unintentional. While exposing our follies and vices, he meant, no doubt, to do justice to our merits. Avoiding the insipidity of a direct panegyric, he has more delicately praised us by assuming our own air in professed satire.

Notwithstanding the success of his work, M. de Montesquieu did not acknowledge it. Perhaps he wished to escape criticism. Perhaps he wished to avoid a contrast of the frivolity of the 'Persian Letters' with the gravity of his office; a sort of reproach which critics never fail to make, because it requires no sort of effort. But his secret was discovered, and the public suggested his name for the Academy. The event justified M. de Montesquieu's silence. Usbec expresses himself freely, not concerning the fundamentals of Christianity, but about matters which people affect to confound with Christianity itself: about the spirit of persecution which has animated so many Christians; about the temporal usurpation of ecclesiastical power; about the excessive multiplication of monasteries, which deprive the State of subjects without giving worshipers to God; about some opinions which would fain be established as principles; about our religious disputes, always violent and often fatal. If he appears anywhere to touch upon questions more vital to Christianity itself, his reflections are in fact favorable to revelation, because he shows how little human reason, left to itself, knows.

Among the genuine letters of M. de Montesquieu the foreign printer had inserted some by another hand. Before the author was condemned, these should have been thrown out. Regardless of these considerations, hatred masquerading as zeal, and zeal without understanding, rose and united themselves against the 'Persian Letters.' Informers, a species of men dangerous and base, alarmed the piety of the ministry. M. de Montesquieu, urged by his friends, supported by the public voice, having offered himself for the vacant place of M. de Sacy in the French Academy, the minister wrote "The Forty" that his Majesty would never accept the election of the author of the 'Persian Letters'; that he had not, indeed, read the book, but that persons in whom he placed confidence had informed him of its poisonous tendency. M. de Montesquieu saw what a blow such an accusation might prove to his person, his family, and his tranquillity. He neither sought literary honors nor affected to disdain them when they came in his way, nor did he regard the lack of them as a misfortune: but a perpetual exclusion, and the motives of that exclusion, appeared to him to be an injury. He saw the minister, and explained that though he did not acknowledge the 'Persian Letters,' he would not disown a work for which he had no reason to blush; and that he ought to be judged upon its contents, and not upon mere hearsay. At last the minister read the book, loved the author, and learned wisdom as to his advisers. The French Academy obtained one of its greatest ornaments, and France had the happiness to keep a subject whom superstition or calumny had nearly deprived her of; for M. de Montesquieu had declared to the government that, after the affront they proposed, he would go among foreigners in quest of that safety, that repose, and perhaps those rewards which he might reasonably have expected in his own country. The nation would really have deplored his loss, while yet the disgrace of it must have fallen upon her.

M. de Montesquieu was received the 24th of January, 1728. His oration is one of the best ever pronounced here. Among many admirable passages which shine out in its pages is the deep-thinking writer's characterization of Cardinal Richelieu, "who taught France the secret of its strength, and Spain that of its weakness; who freed Germany from her chains and gave her new ones."

The new Academician was the worthier of this title, that he had renounced all other employments to give himself entirely up to his genius and his taste. However important was his place, he perceived that a different work must employ his talents; that the citizen is accountable to his country and to mankind for all the good he may do; and that he could be more useful by his writings than by settling obscure legal disputes. He was no longer a magistrate, but only a man of letters.

But that his works should serve other nations, it was necessary that he should travel, his aim being to examine the natural and moral world, to study the laws and constitution of every country; to visit scholars, writers, artists, and everywhere to seek for those rare men whose conversation sometimes supplies the place of years of observation. M. de Montesquieu might have said, like Democritus, "I have forgot nothing to instruct myself; I have quitted my country and traveled over the universe, the better to know truth; I have seen all the illustrious personages of my time." But there was this difference between the French Democritus and him of Abdera, that the first traveled to instruct men, and the second to laugh at them.

He went first to Vienna, where he often saw the celebrated Prince Eugene. This hero, so fatal to France (to which he might have been so useful), after having checked the advance of Louis XIV. and humbled the Ottoman pride, lived without pomp, loving and cultivating letters in a court where they are little honored, and showing his masters how to protect them.

Leaving Vienna, the traveler visited Hungary, an opulent and fertile country, inhabited by a haughty and generous nation, the scourge of its tyrants and the support of its sovereigns. As few persons know this country well, he has written with care this part of his travels.

From Germany he went to Italy. At Venice he met the famous Mr. Law, of whose former grandeur nothing remained but projects fortunately destined to die away unorganized, and a diamond which he pawned to play at games of hazard. One day the conversation turned on the famous system which Law had invented; the source of so many calamities, so many colossal fortunes, and so remarkable a corruption in our morals. As the Parliament of Paris had made some resistance to the Scotch minister on this occasion, M. de Montesquieu asked him why he had never tried to overcome this resistance by a method almost always infallible in England, by the grand mover of human actions—in a word, by money. « These are not,» answered Law, « geniuses so ardent and so generous as my countrymen; but they are much more incorruptible.» It is certainly true that a society which is free for a limited time ought to resist corruption more than one which is always free: the first, when it sells its liberty, loses it; the second, so to speak, only lends it, and exercises it even when it is thus parting with it. Thus the circumstances and nature of government give rise to the vices and virtues of nations.

Another person, no less famous, whom M. de Montesquieu saw still oftener at Venice, was Count de Bonneval. This man, so well known for his adventures, which were not yet at an end, delighted to converse with so good a judge and so excellent a hearer, often related to him the military actions in which he had been engaged, and the remarkable circumstances of his life, and drew the characters of generals and ministers whom he had known.

He went from Venice to Rome. In this ancient capital of the world he studied the works of Raphael, of Titian, and of Michael Angelo. Accustomed to study nature, he knew her when she was translated, as a faithful portrait appeals to all who are familiar with the original.

After having traveled over Italy, M. de Montesquieu came to Switzerland and studied those vast countries which are watered by the Rhine. There was the less for him to see in Germany that Frederick did not yet reign. In the United Provinces he beheld an admirable monument of what human industry animated by a love of liberty can do. In England he stayed three years. Welcomed by the greatest men, he had nothing to regret save that he had not made his journey sooner. Newton and Locke were dead. But he had often the honor of paying his respects to their patroness, the celebrated Queen of England, who cultivated philosophy upon a throne, and who properly esteemed and valued M. de Montesquieu. Nor was he less well received by the nation. At London he formed intimate friendships with the great thinkers. With them he studied the nature of the government, attaining profound knowledge of it.

As he had set out neither as an enthusiast nor a cynic, he brought back neither a disdain for foreigners nor a contempt for his own country. It was the result of his observations that Germany was made to travel in, Italy to sojourn in, England to think in, and France to live in.

After returning to his own country, M. de Montesquieu retired for two years to his estate of La Brède, enjoying that solitude which a life in the tumult and hurry of the world but makes the more agreeable. He lived with himself, after having so long lived with others; and finished his work 'On the Cause of the Grandeur and Decline of the Romans,' which appeared in 1734.

Empires, like men, must increase, decay, and be extinguished. But this necessary revolution may have hidden causes which the veil of time conceals from us.

Nothing in this respect more resembles modern history than ancient history. That of the Romans must, however, be excepted. It presents us with a rational policy, a connected system of aggrandizement, which will not permit us to attribute the great fortune of this people to obscure and inferior sources. The causes of the Roman grandeur may then be found in history, and it is the business of the philosopher to discover them. Besides, there are no systems in this study, as in that of physics, which are easily overthrown, because one new and unforeseen experiment can upset them in an instant. On the contrary, when we carefully collect the facts, if we do not always gather together all the desired materials, we may at least hope one day to obtain more. A great historian combines in the most perfect manner these defective materials. His merit is like that of an architect, who, from a few remains, traces the plan of an ancient edifice; supplying, by genius and happy conjectures, what was wanting in fact.

It is from this point of view that we ought to consider the work of M. de Montesquieu. He finds the causes of the grandeur of the Romans in that love of liberty, of labor, and of country, which was instilled into them during their infancy; in those intestine divisions which gave an activity to their genius, and which ceased immediately upon the appearance of an enemy; in that constancy after misfortunes, which never despaired of the republic; in that principle they adhered to of never making peace but after victories; in the honor of a triumph, which was a subject of emulation among the generals; in that protection which they granted to those peoples who rebelled against their kings; in the excellent policy of permitting the conquered to preserve their religion and customs; and the equally excellent determination never to have two enemies upon their hands at once, but to bear everything from the one till they had destroyed the other. He finds the causes of their declension in the aggrandizement of the State itself: in those distant wars, which, obliging the citizens to be too long absent, made them insensibly lose their republican spirit; in the too easily granted privilege of being citizens of Rome, which made the Roman people at last become a sort of many-headed monster; in the corruption introduced by the luxury of Asia; in the proscriptions of Sylla, which debased the genius of the nation, and prepared it for slavery; in the necessity of having a master while their liberty was become burdensome to them; in the necessity of changing their maxims when they changed their government; in that series of monsters who reigned, almost without interruption, from Tiberius to Nerva, and from Commodus to Constantine; lastly, in the translation and division of the empire, which perished first in the West by the power of barbarians, and after having languished in the East, under weak or cruel emperors, insensibly died away, like those rivers which disappear in the sands.

In a very small volume M. de Montesquieu explained and unfolded his picture. Avoiding detail, and seizing only essentials, he has included in a very small space a vast number of objects distinctly perceived, and rapidly presented, without fatiguing the reader. While he points out much, he leaves us still more to reflect upon; and he might have entitled his book, 'A Roman History for the Use of Statesmen and Philosophers.'

Whatever reputation M. de Montesquieu had thus far acquired, he had but cleared the way for a far grander undertaking—for that which ought to immortalize his name, and commend it to the admiration of future ages. He had meditated for twenty years upon its execution; or, to speak more exactly, his whole life had been a perpetual meditation upon it. He had made himself in some sort a stranger in his own country, the better to understand it. He had studied profoundly the different peoples of Europe. The famous island, which so glories in her laws, and which makes so bad a use of them, proved to him what Crete had been to Lycurgus—a school where he learned much without approving everything. Thus he attained by degrees to the noblest title a wise man can deserve, that of legislator of nations.

If he was animated by the importance of his subject, he was at the same time terrified by its extent. He abandoned it, and returned to it again and again. More than once, as he himself owns, he felt his paternal hands fail him. At last, encouraged by his friends, he resolved to publish the 'Spirit of Laws.'

In this important work M. de Montesquieu, without insisting, like his predecessors, upon metaphysical discussions, without confining himself, like them, to consider certain people in certain particular relations or circumstances, takes a view of the actual inhabitants of the world in all their conceivable relations to each other. Most other writers in this way are either simple moralists, or simple lawyers, or even sometimes simple theologists. As for him, a citizen of all nations, he cares less what duty requires of us than what means may constrain us to do it; about the metaphysical perfection of laws, than about what man is capable of; about laws which have been made, than about those which ought to have been made; about the laws of a particular people, than about those of all peoples. Thus, when comparing himself to those who have run before him in this noble and grand career, he might say, with Correggio, when he had seen the works of his rivals, "And I, too, am a Painter."

Filled with his subject, the author of the 'Spirit of Laws' comprehends so many materials, and treats them with such brevity and depth, that assiduous reading alone discloses its merit. This study will make that pretended want of method, of which some readers have accused M. de Montesquieu, disappear. Real want of order should be distinguished from what is apparent only. Real disorder confuses the analogy and connection of ideas;

or sets up conclusions as principles, so that the reader, after innumerable windings, finds himself at the point whence he set out. Apparent disorder is when the author, putting his ideas in their true place, leaves it to the readers to supply intermediate ones. M. de Montesquieu's book is designed for men who think, for men capable of supplying voluntary and reasonable omissions.

The order perceivable in the grand divisions of the 'Spirit of Laws' pervades the smaller details also. By his method of arrangement we easily perceive the influence of the different parts upon each other: as, in a system of human knowledge well understood, we may perceive the mutual relation of sciences and arts. There must always remain something arbitrary in every comprehensive scheme, and all that can be required of an author is, that he follow strictly his own system.

For an allowable obscurity the same defense exists. What may be obscure to the ignorant is not so for those whom the author had in mind. Besides, voluntary obscurity is not properly obscurity. Obliged to present truths of great importance, the direct avowal of which might have shocked without doing good, M. de Montesquieu has had the prudence to conceal them from those whom they might have hurt without hiding them from the wise.

He has especially profited from the two most thoughtful historians, Tacitus and Plutarch; but, though a philosopher familiar with these authors might have dispensed with many others, he neglected nothing that could be of use. The reading necessary for the 'Spirit of Laws' is immense; and the author's ingenuity is the more wonderful because he was almost blind, and obliged to depend on other men's eyes. This prodigious reading contributes not only to the utility, but to the agreeableness of the work. Without sacrificing dignity, M. de Montesquieu entertains the reader by unfamiliar facts, or by delicate allusions, or by those strong and brilliant touches which paint, by one stroke, nations and men.

In a word, M. de Montesquieu stands for the study of laws, as Descartes stood for that of philosophy. He often instructs us, and is sometimes mistaken; and even when he mistakes, he instructs those who know how to read him. The last edition of his works demonstrates, by its many corrections and additions, that when he has made a slip, he has been able to rise again.

But what is within the reach of all the world is the spirit of the 'Spirit of Laws,' which ought to endear the author to all nations, to cover far greater faults than are his. The love of the public good, a desire to see men happy, reveals itself everywhere; and had it no other merit, it would be worthy, on this account alone, to be read by nations and kings. Already we may perceive that the fruits of this work are ripe. Though M. de Montesquieu scarcely survived the publication of the 'Spirit of Laws,' he had the satisfaction to foresee its effects among us; the natural love of Frenchmen for their country turned toward its true object; that taste for commerce, for agriculture, and for useful arts, which insensibly spreads itself in our nation; that general knowledge of the principles of government, which renders people more attached to that which they ought to love. Even the men who have indecently attacked this work perhaps owe more to it than they imagine. Ingratitude, besides, is their least fault. It is not without regret and mortification that we expose them; but this history is of too much consequence to M. de Montesquieu and to philosophy to be passed over in silence. May that reproach, which at last covers his enemies, profit them!

The 'Spirit of Laws' was at once eagerly sought after on account of the reputation of its author; but though M. de Montesquieu had written for thinkers, he had the vulgar for his judge. The brilliant passages scattered up and down the work, admitted only because they illustrated the subject, made the ignorant believe that it was written for them. Looking for an entertaining book, they found a useful one, whose scheme and details they could not comprehend without attention. The 'Spirit of Laws' was treated with a deal of cheap wit; even the title of it was made a subject of pleasantry. In a word, one of the finest literary monuments which our nation ever produced was received almost with scurrility. It was requisite that competent judges should have time to read it, that they might correct the errors of the fickle multitude. That small public which teaches, dictated to that large public which listens to hear, how it ought to think and speak; and the suffrages of men of abilities formed only one voice over all Europe.

The open and secret enemies of letters and philosophy now united their darts against this work. Hence that multitude of pamphlets discharged against the author, weapons which we shall not draw from oblivion. If those authors were not forgotten, it might be believed that the 'Spirit of Laws' was written amid a nation of barbarians.

M. de Montesquieu despised the obscure criticisms of the curious. He ranked them with those weekly newspapers whose encomiums have no authority, and their darts no effect; which indolent readers run over without believing, and in which sovereigns are insulted without knowing it. But he was not equally indifferent about those principles of irreligion which they accused him of having propagated. By ignoring such reproaches he would have seemed to deserve them, and the importance of the object made him shut his eyes to the meanness of his adversaries. The ultra-zealous, afraid of that light which letters diffuse, not to the prejudice of religion, but to their own disadvantage, took different ways of attacking him; some, by a trick as puerile as cowardly, wrote fictitious letters to themselves; others, attacking him anonymously, had afterwards fallen by the ears among themselves. M. de Montesquieu contented himself with making an example of the most extravagant. This was the author of an anonymous periodical paper, who accused M. de Montesquieu of Spinozism and deism (two imputations which are incompatible); of having followed the system of Pope (of which there is not a word in his works); of having quoted Plutarch, who is not a Christian author; of not having spoken of original sin and of grace. In a word, he pretended that the 'Spirit of Laws' was a production of the constitution *Unigenitus;* a preposterous idea. Those who understand M. de Montesquieu and Clement XI. may judge, by this accusation, of the rest.

This enemy procured the philosopher an addition of glory as a man of letters: the 'Defense of the Spirit of Laws' appeared. This work, for its moderation, truth, delicacy of ridicule, is a model. M. de Montesquieu might easily have made his adversary odious; he did better — he made him ridiculous. We owe the aggressor eternal thanks for having procured us this masterpiece. For here, without intending it, the author has drawn a picture of himself; those who knew him think they hear him; and posterity, when reading his 'Defense,' will decide that his conversation equaled his writings — an encomium which few great men have deserved.

Another circumstance gave him the advantage. The critic loudly accused the clergy of France, and especially the faculty of theology, of indifference to the cause of God, because they did not proscribe the 'Spirit of Laws.' The faculty resolved to examine the 'Spirit of Laws.' Though several years have passed, it has not yet pronounced a decision. It knows the grounds of reason and of faith; it knows that the work of a man of letters ought not to be examined like that of a theologian; that a bad interpretation does not condemn a proposition, and that it may injure the weak to see an ill-timed suspicion of heresy thrown upon geniuses of the first rank. In spite of this unjust accusation, M. de Montesquieu was always esteemed, visited, and well received by the greatest and most respectable dignitaries of the Church. Would he have preserved this esteem among men of worth, if they had regarded him as a dangerous writer?

M. de Montesquieu's death was not unworthy of his life. Suffering greatly, far from a family that was dear to him, surrounded by a few friends and a great crowd of spectators, he preserved to the last his calmness and serenity of soul. After performing with decency every duty, full of confidence in the Eternal Being, he died with the tranquillity of a man of worth, who had ever consecrated his talents to virtue and humanity. France and Europe lost him February 10th, 1755, aged sixty-six.

All the newspapers published this event as a misfortune. We may apply to M. de Montesquieu what was formerly said of an illustrious Roman: that nobody, when told of his death, showed any joy or forgot him when he was no more. Foreigners were eager to demonstrate their regrets: my Lord Chesterfield, whom it is enough to name, wrote an article to his honor — an article worthy of both. It is the portrait of Anaxagoras drawn by Pericles. The Royal Academy of Sciences and Belles-Lettres of Prussia, though it is not its custom to pronounce a eulogy on foreign members, paid him an honor which only the illustrious John Bernoulli had hitherto received. M. de Maupertuis, though ill, performed himself this last duty to his friend, and would not permit so sacred an office to fall to the share of any other. To these honorable suffrages were added those praises given him, in presence of one of us, by that very monarch to whom this celebrated Academy owes its lustre; a prince who feels the losses which Philosophy sustains, and at the same time comforts her.

The 17th of February the French Academy, according to custom, performed a solemn service for him, at which all the learned men of this body assisted. They ought to have placed the 'Spirit of Laws' upon his coffin, as heretofore they exposed, opposite to that of Raphael, his Transfiguration. This simple and affecting decoration would have been a fit funeral oration.

M. de Montesquieu had, in company, an unvarying sweetness and gayety of temper. His conversation was spirited, agreeable, and instructive, because he had known so many great men. It was, like his style, concise, full of wit and sallies, without gall, and without satire. Nobody told a story more brilliantly, more readily, more gracefully, or with less affectation.

His frequent absence of mind only made him the more amusing. He always roused himself to reanimate the conversation. The fire of his genius, his prodigality of ideas, gave rise to flashes of speech; but he never interrupted an interesting conversation; and he was attentive without affectation and without constraint. His conversation not only resembled his character and his genius, but had the method which he observed in his study. Though capable of long-continued meditation, he never exhausted his strength; he always left off application before he felt the least symptom of fatigue.

He was sensible to glory, but wished only to deserve it, and never tried to augment his own fame by underhand practices.

Worthy of all distinctions, he asked none, and he was not surprised that he was forgot; but he has protected at court men of letters who were persecuted, celebrated, and unfortunate, and has obtained favors for them.

Though he lived with the great, their company was not necessary to his happiness. He retired whenever he could to the country; there again with joy to welcome his philosophy, his books, and his repose. After having studied man in the commerce of the world, and in the history of nations, he studied him also among those simple people whom nature alone has instructed. From them he could learn something; he endeavored, like Socrates, to find out their genius; he appeared as happy thus as in the most brilliant assemblies, especially when he made up their differences, and comforted them by his beneficence.

Nothing does greater honor to his memory than the economy with which he lived, and which has been blamed as excessive in a proud and avaricious age. He would not encroach on the provision for his family, even by his generosity to the unfortunate, or by those expenses which his travels, the weakness of his sight, and the printing of his works made necessary. He transmitted to his children, without diminution or augmentation, the estate which he received from his ancestors, adding nothing to it but the glory of his name and the example of his life. He had married, in 1715, dame Jane de Lartigue, daughter of Peter de Lartigue, lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of Molevrier, and had by her two daughters and one son.

Those who love truth and their country will not be displeased to find some of his maxims here. He thought: That every part of the State ought to be equally subject to the laws, but that the privileges of every part of the State ought to be respected when they do not oppose the natural right which obliges every citizen equally to contribute to the public good; that ancient possession was in this kind the first of titles, and the most inviolable of rights, which it was always unjust and sometimes dangerous to shake; that magistrates, in all circumstances, and notwithstanding their own advantage, ought to be magistrates without partiality and without passion, like the laws which absolve and punish without love or hatred. He said upon occasion of those ecclesiastical disputes which so much employed the Greek emperors and Christians, that theological disputes, when they are not confined to the schools, infallibly dishonor a nation in the eyes of its neighbors: in fact, the contempt in which wise men hold those quarrels does not vindicate the character of their country; because, sages making everywhere the least noise, and being the smallest number, it is never from them that the nation is judged.

We look upon that special interest which M. de Montesquieu took in the 'Encyclopédie' as one of the most honorable rewards of our labor. Perhaps the opposition which the work has met with, reminding him of his own experience, interested him the more in our favor. Perhaps he was sensible, without perceiving it, of that justice which we dared to do him in the first volume of the 'Encyclopédie,' when nobody as yet had ventured to say a word in his defense. He prepared for us an article upon 'Taste,' which has been found unfinished among his papers. We shall give it to the public in that condition, and treat it with the same respect that antiquity formerly showed to the last words of Seneca. Death prevented his giving us any further marks of his approval; and joining our own griefs with those of all Europe, we might write on his tomb:—

"*Finis vitæ ejus nobis luctuosus, patriæ tristis, extraneis etiam ignotisque non sine cura fuit.*"

VITTORIO ALFIERI

(1749–1803)

BY L. OSCAR KUHNS

Italian literature during the eighteenth century, although it could boast of no names in any way comparable with those of Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso, showed still a vast improvement on the degradation of the preceding century. Among the most famous writers of the times — Goldoni, Parini, Metastasio — none is so great or so famous as Vittorio Alfieri, the founder of Italian tragedy. The story of his life and of his literary activity, as told by himself in his memoirs, is one of extreme interest. Born at Asti, on January 17th, 1749, of a wealthy and noble family, he grew up to manhood singularly deficient in knowledge and culture, and without the slightest interest in literature. He was «uneducated,» to use his own phrase, in the Academy of Turin. It was only after a long tour in Italy, France, Holland, and England, that, recognizing his own ignorance, he went to Florence to begin serious work.

At the age of twenty-seven a sudden revelation of his dramatic power came to him, and with passionate energy he spent the rest of his life in laborious study and in efforts to make himself worthy of a place among the poets of his native land. Practically he had to learn everything; for he himself tells us that he had «an almost total ignorance of the rules of dramatic composition, and an unskillfulness almost total in the divine and most necessary art of writing well and handling his own language.»

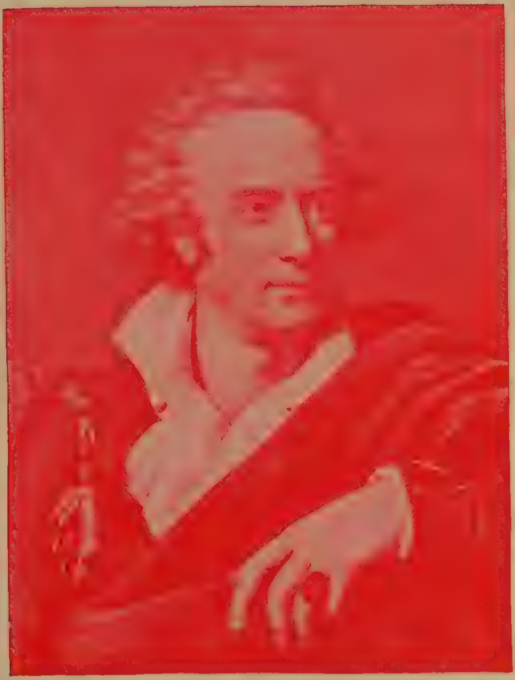
His private life was eventful, chiefly through his many sentimental attachments, its deepest experience being his profound love and friendship for the Countess of Albany, — Louise Stolberg, mistress and afterward wife of the «Young Pretender,» who passed under the title of Count of Albany, and from whom she was finally divorced. The production of Alfieri's tragedies began with the sketch called ‘Cleopatra,’ in 1775, and lasted till 1789, when a complete edition, by Didot, appeared in Paris. His only important prose work is his ‘Autobiography,’ begun in 1790 and ended in the year of his death, 1803. Although he wrote several comedies and a number of sonnets and satires, — which do not often rise above mediocrity, — it is as a tragic poet that he is known to fame. Before him — though Goldoni had successfully imitated Molière in comedy, and Metastasio had become enormously popular as the poet of love and the opera — no tragedies had been written in Italy which deserved to be compared with the great dramas of France, Spain, and England. Indeed, it had been said that tragedy was not adapted to the Italian tongue or character. It remained for Alfieri to prove the falsity of this theory.

Always sensitive to the charge of plagiarism, Alfieri declared that whether his tragedies were good or bad, they were at least his own. This is true to a certain extent. And yet he was influenced more than he was willing to acknowledge by the French dramatists of the seventeenth century. In common with Corneille and Racine, he observed strictly the three unities of time, place, and action. But the courtliness of language, the grace and poetry of the French dramas, and especially the tender love of Racine, are altogether lacking with him.

Alfieri had a certain definite theory of tragedy which he followed with unswerving fidelity. He aimed at the simplicity and directness of the Greek drama. He sought to give one clear, definite action, which should advance in a straight line from beginning to end, without deviation, and carry along the characters — who are, for the most part, helplessly entangled in the toils of a relentless fate — to an inevitable destruction. For this reason the well-known *confidantes* of the French stage were discarded, no secondary action or episodes were admitted, and the whole play was shortened to a little more than two-thirds of the average French classic drama. Whatever originality Alfieri possessed did not show itself in the choice of subjects, which are nearly all well known and had often been used before. From Racine he took ‘Polynice,’ ‘Merope’ had been treated by Maffei and Voltaire, and Shakespeare had immortalized the story of Brutus. The situations and events are often conventional; the passions are those familiar to the stage,— jealousy, revenge, hatred, and unhappy love. And yet Alfieri has treated these subjects in a way which differs from all others, and which stamps them, in a certain sense, as his own. With him all is sombre and melancholy; the scene is utterly unrelieved by humor, by the flowers of poetry, or by that deep-hearted sympathy — the pity of it all — which softens the tragic effect of Shakespeare's plays.

Alfieri seemed to be attracted toward the most horrible phases of human life, and the most terrible events of history and tradition. The passions he describes are those of unnatural love, of jealousy between father and son, of fratricidal hatred, or those in which a sense of duty and love for liberty triumphs over the ties of filial and parental love. In treating the story of the second Brutus, it was not enough for his purpose to have Cæsar murdered by his friend; but, availing himself of an unproven tradition, he makes Brutus the son of Cæsar, and thus a parricide.

It is interesting to notice his vocabulary; to see how constantly he uses such words as «atrocious,» «horror,» «terrible,» «incest,»



V. ALFIERI.

«rivers,» «streams,» «lakes,» and «seas» of blood. The exclamation, «Oh, rage!» occurs on almost every page. Death, murder, suicide, is the outcome of every tragedy.

The actors are few,—in many plays only four,—and each represents a certain passion. They never change, but remain true to their characters from beginning to end. The villains are monsters of cruelty and vice, and the innocent and virtuous are invariably their victims, and succumb at last.

Alfieri's purpose in producing these plays was not to amuse an idle public, but to promulgate throughout his native land—then under Spanish domination—the great and lofty principle of liberty which inspired his whole life. A deep, uncompromising hatred of kings is seen in every drama, where invariably a tyrant figures as the villain. There is a constant declamation against tyranny and slavery. Liberty is portrayed as something dearer than life itself. The struggle for freedom forms the subjects of five of his plays,—'Virginia,' 'The Conspiracy of the Pazzi,' 'Timoleon,' the 'First Brutus,' and the 'Second Brutus.' One of these is dedicated to George Washington—'Liberator dell' America.' The warmth of feeling with which, in the 'Conspiracy of the Pazzi,' the degradation and slavery of Florence under the Medici is depicted, betrays clearly Alfieri's sense of the political state of Italy in his own day. And the poet undoubtedly has gained the gratitude of his countrymen for his voicing of that love for liberty which has always existed in their hearts.

Just as Alfieri sought to condense the action of his plays, so he strove for brevity and condensation in language. His method of composing was peculiar. He first sketched his play in prose, then worked it over in poetry, often spending years in the process of rewriting and polishing. In his indomitable energy, his persistence in labor, and his determination to acquire a fitting style, he reminds us of Balzac. His brevity of language—which shows itself most strikingly in the omission of articles, and in the number of broken exclamations—gives his pages a certain sententiousness, almost like proverbs. He purposely renounced all attempts at the graces and flowers of poetry.

It is hard for the lover of Shakespearean tragedy to be just to the merits of Alfieri. There is a uniformity, or even a monotony, in these nineteen plays, whose characters are more or less alike, whose method of procedure is the same, whose sentiments are analogous, and in which an activity devoid of incident hurries the reader to an inevitable conclusion, foreseen from the first act.

And yet the student cannot fail to detect great tragic power, sombre and often unnatural, but never producing that sense of the ridiculous which sometimes mars the effect of Victor Hugo's dramas. The plots are never obscure, the language is never trivial, and the play ends with a climax which leaves a profound impression.

The very nature of Alfieri's tragedies makes it difficult to represent him without giving a complete play. The following extracts, however, illustrate admirably the horror and power of his climaxes.

L. Oscar Kuhns.

AGAMEMNON

[During the absence of Agamemnon at the siege of Troy, Ægisthus, son of Thyestes and the relentless enemy of the House of Atreus, wins the love of Clytemnestra, and with devilish ingenuity persuades her that the only way to save her life and his is to slay her husband.]

ACT IV—SCENE I

ÆGISTHUS — CLYTEMNESTRA

ÆGISTHUS—To be a banished man, . . . to fly, . . . to die;
. . . These are the only means that I have left.
Thou, far from me, deprived of every hope
Of seeing me again, wilt from thy heart
Have quickly chased my image: great Atrides
Will wake a far superior passion there;
Thou, in his presence, many happy days
Wilt thou enjoy— These auspices may Heaven
Confirm— I cannot now evince to thee
A surer proof of love than by my flight; . . .
A dreadful, hard, irrevocable proof.
Clytemnestra—If there be need of death, we both will die!—
But is there nothing left to try ere this?
Ægis.—Another plan, perchance, e'en now remains; . . .
But little worthy . . .
Cly.—And it is—
Ægis.—Too cruel.
Cly.—But certain?
Ægis.—Certain, ah, too much so!
Cly.—How
Canst thou hide it from me?
Ægis.—How canst thou
Of me demand it?

Cly.—What then may it be? . . .
I know not . . . Speak: I am too far advanced;
I cannot now retract: perchance already
I am suspected by Atrides; maybe
He has the right already to despise me:
Hence do I feel constrained, e'en now, to hate him;
I cannot longer in his presence live;
I neither will, nor dare.—Do thou, Ægisthus,
Teach me a means, whatever it may be,
A means by which I may withdraw myself
From him forever.
Ægis.—Thou withdraw thyself
From him? I have already said to thee
That now 'tis utterly impossible.
Cly.—What other step remains for me to take? . . .
Ægis.—None.
Cly.—Now I understand thee.—What a flash,
Oh, what a deadly, instantaneous flash
Of criminal conviction rushes through
My obtuse mind! What throbbing turbulence
In ev'ry vein I feel!—I understand thee:
The cruel remedy . . . the only one . . .
Is Agamemnon's life-blood.
Ægis.—I am silent . . .
Cly.—Yet, by thy silence, thou dost ask that blood.
Ægis.—Nay, rather I forbid it.—To our love
And to thy life (of mine I do not speak)
His living is the only obstacle;
But yet, thou knowest that his life is sacred:
To love, respect, defend it, thou art bound;
And I to tremble at it.—Let us cease:
The hour advances now; my long discourse
Might give occasion to suspicious thoughts.—
At length receive . . . Ægisthus's last farewell.
Cly.—Ah! hear me . . . Agamemnon to our love . . .
And to thy life? . . . Ah, yes; there are, besides him,
No other obstacles: too certainly
His life is death to us!
Ægis.—Ah! do not heed
My words: they spring from too much love.
Cly.—And love
Revealed to me their meaning.
Ægis.—Hast thou not
Thy mind o'erwhelmed with horror?

Cly.— Horror? . . . yes; . . .
But then to part from thee! . . .
Ægis.— Wouldst have the courage? . . .
Cly.— So vast my love, it puts an end to fear.
Ægis.— But the king lives surrounded by his friends:
What sword would find a passage to his heart?
Cly.— What sword?
Ægis.— Here open violence were vain.
Cly.— Yet, . . . treachery! . . .
Ægis.—'Tis true, he merits not
To be betrayed, Atrides: he who loves
His wife so well; he who, enchained from Troy,
In semblance of a slave in fetters, brought
Cassandra, whom he loves, to whom he is
Himself a slave . . .
Cly.— What do I hear!
Ægis.— Meanwhile
Expect that when of thee his love is wearied,
He will divide with her his throne and bed;
Expect that, to thy many other wrongs,
Shame will be added: and do thou alone
Not be exasperated at a deed
That rouses every Argive.
Cly.— What said'st thou? . . .
Cassandra chosen as my rival? . . .
Ægis.— So
Atrides wills.
Cly.— Then let Atrides perish.
Ægis.— How? By what hand?
Cly.— By mine, this very night,
Within that bed which he expects to share
With this abhorred slave.
Ægis.— O Heavens! but think . . .
Cly.— I am resolved . . .
Ægis.— Shouldst thou repent? . . .
Cly.— I do
That I so long delayed.
Ægis.— And yet . . .
Cly.— I'll do it;
I, e'en if thou wilt not. Shall I let thee,
Who only dost deserve my love, be dragged
To cruel death? And shall I let him live
Who cares not for my love? I swear to thee,
To-morrow thou shalt be the king in Argos.

Nor shall my hand, nor shall my bosom tremble . . .
But who approaches?
Ægis.—'Tis Electra . . .
Cly.—Heavens!
Let us avoid her. Do thou trust in me.

SCENE II

ELECTRA

Electra—Ægisthus flies from me, and he does well;
But I behold that likewise from my sight
My mother seeks to fly. Infatuated
And wretched mother! She could not resist
The guilty eagerness for the last time
To see Ægisthus.—They have here, at length,
Conferred together . . . But Ægisthus seems
Too much elated, and too confident,
For one condemned to exile . . . She appeared
Like one disturbed in thought, but more possessed
With anger and resentment than with grief . . .
O Heavens! who knows to what that miscreant base,
With his infernal arts, may have impelled her!
To what extremities have wrought her up! . . . .
Now, now, indeed, I tremble: what misdeeds,
How black in kind, how manifold in number,
Do I behold! . . . Yet, if I speak, I kill
My mother: . . . If I'm silent—? . . .

ACT V—SCENE II

ÆGISTHUS — CLYTEMNESTRA

Ægis.—Hast thou performed the deed?
Cly.—Ægisthus . . .
Ægis.—What do I behold? O woman,
What dost thou here, dissolved in useless tears?
Tears are unprofitable, late, and vain;
And they may cost us dear.
Cly.—Thou here? . . . but how? . . .
Wretch that I am! what have I promised thee?
What impious counsel? . . .
Ægis.—Was not thine the counsel?
Love gave it thee, and fear recants it.—Now,
Since thou'rt repentant, I am satisfied;

Soothed by reflecting that thou art not guilty,
I shall at least expire. To thee I said
How difficult the enterprise would be;
But thou, depending more than it became thee
On that which is not in thee, virile courage,
Daredst thyself thy own unwarlike hand
For such a blow select. May Heaven permit
That the mere project of a deed like this
May not be fatal to thee! I by stealth,
Protected by the darkness, hither came,
And unobserved, I hope. I was constrained
To bring the news myself, that now my life
Is irrecoverably forfeited
To the king's vengeance . . .
Cly.—What is this I hear?
Whence didst thou learn it?
Ægis.—More than he would wish
Atrides hath discovered of our love;
And I already from him have received
A strict command not to depart from Argos.
And further, I am summoned to his presence
Soon as to-morrow dawns: thou seest well
That such a conference to me is death.
But fear not; for I will all means employ
To bear myself the undivided blame.
Cly.—What do I hear? Atrides knows it all?
Ægis.—He knows too much: I have but one choice left:
It will be best for me to 'scape by death,
By self-inflicted death, this dangerous inquest.
I save my honor thus; and free myself
From an opprobrious end. I hither came
To give thee my last warning: and to take
My last farewell. . . . Oh, live; and may thy fame
Live with thee, unimpeached! All thoughts of pity
For me now lay aside; if I'm allowed
By my own hand, for thy sake, to expire,
I am supremely blest.
Cly.—Alas! . . . Ægisthus . . .
What a tumultuous passion rages now
Within my bosom, when I hear thee speak! . . .
And is it true? . . . Thy death . . .
Ægis.—Is more than certain. . . .
Cly.—And I'm thy murderer! . . .
Ægis.—I seek thy safety.

Cly.— What wicked fury from Avernus' shore,
Ægisthus, guides thy steps? Oh, I had died
Of grief, if I had never seen thee more;
But guiltless I had died: spite of myself,
Now, by thy presence, I already am
Again impelled to this tremendous crime. . . .
An anguish, an unutterable anguish,
Invades my bones, invades my every fibre. . . .
And can it be that this alone can save thee? . . .
But who revealed our love?
Ægis.— To speak of thee,
Who but Electra to her father dare?
Who to the monarch breathe thy name but she?
Thy impious daughter in thy bosom thrusts
The fatal sword; and ere she takes thy life,
Would rob thee of thy honor.
Cly.— And ought I
This to believe? . . . Alas! . . .
Ægis.— Believe it, then,
On the authority of this my sword,
If thou believ'st it not on mine. At least
I'll die in time. . . .
Cly.— O Heavens! what wouldst thou do?
Sheathe, I command thee, sheathe that fatal sword.—
Oh, night of horrors! . . . hear me . . . Perhaps Atrides
Has not resolved. . . .
Ægis.— What boots this hesitation? . . .
Atrides injured, and Atrides king,
Meditates nothing in his haughty mind
But blood and vengeance. Certain is my death,
Thine is uncertain: but reflect, O queen,
To what thou'rt destined, if he spare thy life.
And were I seen to enter here alone,
And at so late an hour . . . Alas, what fears
Harrow my bosom when I think of thee!
Soon will the dawn of day deliver thee
From racking doubt; that dawn I ne'er shall see:
I am resolved to die: . . . — Farewell . . . forever!
Cly.— Stay, stay . . . Thou shalt not die.
Ægis.— By no man's hand
Assuredly, except my own:— or thine,
If so thou wilt. Ah, perpetrate the deed;
Kill me; and drag me, palpitating yet,
Before thy judge austere: my blood will be
A proud acquittance for thee.

Cly.— Madd'ning thought! . . .
Wretch that I am! . . . Shall I be thy assassin? . . .
Ægis.— Shame on thy hand, that cannot either kill
Who most adores thee, or who most detests thee!
Mine then must serve. . . .
Cly.— Ah! . . . no. . . .
Ægis.— Dost thou desire
Me, or Atrides, dead?
Cly.— Ah! what a choice! . . .
Ægis.— Thou art compelled to choose.
Cly.— I death inflict . . .
Ægis.— Or death receive; when thou hast witnessed mine.
Cly.— Ah, then the crime is too inevitable!
Ægis.— The time now presses.
Cly.— But . . . the courage . . . strength? . . .
Ægis.— Strength, courage, all, will love impart to thee.
Cly.— Must I then with this trembling hand of mine
Plunge . . . in my husband's heart . . . the sword? . . .
Ægis.— The blows
Thou wilt redouble with a steady hand
In the hard heart of him who slew thy daughter.
Cly.— Far from my hand I hurled the sword in anguish.
Ægis.— Behold a steel, and of another temper:
The clotted blood-drops of Thyestes's sons
Still stiffen on its frame: do not delay
To furbish it once more in the vile blood
Of Atreus; go, be quick: there now remain
But a few moments; go. If awkwardly
The blow thou aimest, or if thou shouldst be
Again repentant, lady, ere 'tis struck,
Do not thou any more tow'rd these apartments
Thy footsteps turn: by my own hands destroyed,
Here wouldst thou find me in a sea of blood
Immersed. Now go, and tremble not; be bold.
Enter and save us by his death.—

SCENE III

ÆGISTHUS

Ægis. —Come forth,
Thyestes, from profound Avernus; come,
Now is the time; within this palace now
Display thy dreadful shade. A copious banquet
Of blood is now prepared for thee, enjoy it;

Already o'er the heart of thy foe's son
Hangs the suspended sword; now, now, he feels it:
An impious consort grasps it; it was fitting
That she, not I, did this: so much more sweet
To thee will be the vengeance, as the crime
Is more atrocious. . . . An attentive ear
Lend to the dire catastrophe with me;
Doubt not she will accomplish it: disdain,
Love, terror, to the necessary crime
Compel the impious woman.—

AGAMEMNON (within)

Aga.—Treason! Ah! . . .
My wife? . . O Heavens! . . I die . . O traitorous deed!
Ægis.—Die, thou—yes, die! And thou redouble,
The blows redouble; all the weapon hide [woman,
Within his heart; shed, to the latest drop,
The blood of that fell miscreant: in our blood
He would have bathed his hands.

SCENE IV

CLYTEMNESTRA — ÆSGISTHUS

Cly.—What have I done?
Where am I? . . .
Ægis.—Thou hast slain the tyrant: now
At length thou'rt worthy of me.
Cly.—See, with blood
The dagger drips; . . . my hands, my face, my garments,
All, all are blood . . . Oh, for a deed like this,
What vengeance will be wreaked! . . . I see already,
Already to my breast that very steel
I see hurled back, and by what hand! I freeze,
I faint, I shudder, I dissolve with horror.
My strength, my utterance, fail me. Where am I?
What have I done? . . . Alas! . . .
Ægis.—Tremendous cries
Resound on every side throughout the palace:
'Tis time to show the Argives what I am,
And reap the harvest of my long endurance.

SCENE V

ELECTRA — ÆGISTHUS

Elec.—It still remains for thee to murder me,
Thou impious, vile assassin of my father . . .
But what do I behold? O Heavens! . . . my mother? . . .
Flagitious woman, dost thou grasp the sword?
Didst thou commit the murder?
Ægis.—Hold thy peace.
Stop not my path thus; quickly I return;
Tremble: for now that I am king of Argos,
Far more important is it that I kill
Orestes than Electra.

SCENE VI

CLYTEMNESTRA—ELECTRA

Cly.—Heavens! . . . Orestes? . . .
Ægisthus, now I know thee. . . .
Elec.—Give it me:
Give me that steel.
Cly.—Ægisthus! . . . Stop! . . . Wilt thou
Murder my son? Thou first shalt murder me.

SCENE VII

ELECTRA

Elec.—O night! . . O father! . . Ah, it was your deed,
Ye gods, this thought of mine to place Orestes
In safety first.—Thou wilt not find him, traitor.—
Ah live, Orestes, live: and I will keep
This impious steel for thy adult right hand.
The day, I hope, will come, when I in Argos
Shall see thee the avenger of thy father.

Translation of Edgar Alfred Bowring, Bohn's Library.

ALFONSO THE WISE

(1221–1284)

King Alfonso," records the Jesuit historian, Mariana, "was a man of great sense, but more fit to be a scholar than a king; for whilst he studied the heavens and the stars, he lost the earth and his kingdom." Certainly it is for his services to letters, and not for political or military successes, that the meditative son of the valorous Ferdinand the Saint and the beautiful Beatrice of Swabia will be remembered. The father conquered Seville, and displaced the enterprising and infidel Moors with orthodox and indolent Christians. The son could not keep what his sire had grasped. Born in 1226, the fortunate young prince, at the age of twenty-five, was proclaimed king of the newly conquered and united Castile and Leon. He was very young: he was everywhere admired and honored for skill in war, for learning, and for piety; he was everywhere loved for his heritage of a great name and his kindly and gracious manners.

In the first year of his reign, however, he began debasing the coinage,—a favorite device of needy monarchs in his day,—and his people never forgave the injury. He coveted, naturally enough, the throne of the Empire, for which he was long a favorite candidate; and for twenty years he wasted time, money, and purpose, heart and hope, in pursuit of the vain bauble. His kingdom fell into confusion, his eldest son died, his second son Sancho rebelled against him and finally deposed him. Courageous and determined to the last, defying the league of Church and State against him, he appealed to the king of Morocco for men and money to reinstate his fortunes.

In Ticknor's 'History of Spanish Literature' may be found his touching letter to De Guzman at the Moorish court. He is, like Lear, poor and discrowned, but not like him, weak. His prelates have stirred up strife, his nobles have betrayed him. If Heaven wills, he is ready to pay generously for help. If not, says the royal philosopher, still, generosity and loyalty exalt the soul that cherishes them.

> "Therefore, my cousin, Alonzo Perez de Guzman, so treat with your master and my friend [the king of Morocco] that he may lend me, on my richest crown and on the jewels in it, as much as shall seem good to him: and if you should be able to obtain his help for me, do not deprive me of it, which I think you will not do; rather I hold that all the good offices which my master may do me, by your hand they will come, and may the hand of God be with you.
>
> "Given in my only loyal city of Seville, the thirtieth year of my reign and the first of my misfortunes.
>
> "The King."

In his «only loyal city» the broken man remained, until the Pope excommunicated Sancho, and till neighboring towns began to capitulate. But he had been wounded past healing. There was no medicine for a mind diseased, no charm to raze out the written troubles of the brain. «He fell ill in Seville, so that he drew nigh unto death. . . . And when the sickness had run its course, he said before them all: that he pardoned the Infante Don Sancho, his heir, all that out of malice he had done against him, and to his subjects the wrong they had wrought towards him, ordering that letters confirming the same should be written—sealed with his golden seal, so that all his subjects should be certain that he had put away his quarrel with them, and desired that no blame whatever should rest upon them. And when he had said this, he received the body of God with great devotion, and in a little while gave up his soul to God.»

This was in 1284, when he was fifty-eight years old. At this age, had a private lot been his,—that of a statesman, jurist, man of science, annalist, philosopher, troubadour, mathematician, historian, poet,—he would but have entered his golden prime, rich in promise, fruitful in performance. Yet Alfonso, uniting in himself all these vocations, seemed at his death to have left behind him a wide waste of opportunities, a dreary dearth of accomplishment. Looking back, however, it is seen that the balance swings even. While his kingdom was slipping away, he was conquering a wider domain. He was creating Spanish Law, protecting the followers of learning, cherishing the universities, restricting privilege, breaking up time-honored abuses. He prohibited the use of Latin in public acts. He adopted the native tongue in all his own works, and thus gave to Spanish an honorable eminence, while French and German struggled long for a learning from scholars, and English was to wait a hundred years for the advent of Dan Chaucer.

Greatest achievement of all, he codified the common law of Spain in ‘Las Siete Partidas’ (The Seven Parts). Still accepted as a legal authority in the kingdom, the work is much more valuable as a compendium of general knowledge than as an exposition of law. The studious king with astonishing catholicity examined alike both Christian and Arabic traditions, customs, and codes, paying a scholarly respect to the greatness of a hostile language and literature. This meditative monarch recognized that public office is a public trust, and wrote:—

> «Vicars of God are the kings, each one in his kingdom, placed over the people to maintain them in justice and in truth. They have been called the heart and soul of the people. For as the soul lies in the heart of men, and by it the body lives and is maintained, so in the king lies justice, which is the life and maintenance of the people of his lordship. . . .

«And let the king guard the thoughts of his heart in three manners: firstly let him not desire nor greatly care to have superfluous and worthless honors. Superfluous and worthless honors the king *ought* not to desire. For that which is beyond necessity cannot last, and being lost and come short of, turns to dishonor. Moreover, the wise men have said that it is no less a virtue for a man to keep that which he has than to gain that which he has not; because keeping comes of judgment, but gain of good fortune. And the king who keeps his honor in such a manner that every day and by all means it is increased, lacking nothing, and does not lose that which he has for that which he desires to have,—he is held for a man of right judgment, who loves his own people, and desires to lead them to all good. And God will keep him in this world from the dishonoring of men, and in the next from the dishonor of the wicked in hell.»

Besides the 'Siete Partidas,' the royal philosopher was the author, or compiler, of a 'Book of Hunting'; a treatise on Chess; a system of law, the 'Fuero Castellano' (Spanish Code),—an attempt to check the monstrous irregularities of municipal privilege; 'La Gran Conquista d'Ultramar (The Great Conquest Beyond the Sea), an account of the wars of the Crusades, which is the earliest known specimen of Castilian prose; and several smaller works, now collected under the general title of 'Opuscules Legales' (Minor Legal Writings). It was long supposed that he wrote the 'Tesoro' (Thesaurus), a curious medley of ignorance and superstition, much of it silly, and all of it curiously inconsistent with the acknowledged character of the enlightened King. Modern scholarship, however, discards this petty treatise from the list of his productions.

His 'Tablas Alfonsinas' (Alfonsine Tables), to which Chaucer refers in the 'Frankeleine's Tale,' though curiously mystical, yet were really scientific, and rank among the most famous of mediæval books. Alfonso had the courage and the wisdom to recall to Toledo the heirs and successors of the great Arabian philosophers and the learned Rabbis, who had been banished by religious fanaticism, and there to establish a permanent council—a mediæval Academy of Sciences—which devoted itself to the study of the heavens and the making of astronomical calculations. «This was the first time,» says the Spanish historian, «that in barbarous times the Republic of Letters was invited to contemplate a great school of learning,—men occupied through many years in rectifying the old planetary observations, in disputing about the most abstruse details of this science, in constructing new instruments, and observing, by means of them, the courses of the stars, their declensions, their ascensions, eclipses, longitudes, and latitudes.» It was the vision of Roger Bacon fulfilled.

At his own expense, for years together, the King entertained in his palace at Burgos, that their knowledge might enrich the nation, not only certain free-thinking followers of Averroës and Avicebron, but infidel disciples of the Koran, and learned Rabbis who denied the true faith. That creed must not interfere with deed, was an astonishing mental attitude for the thirteenth century, and invited a general suspicion of the King's orthodoxy. His religious sense was really strong, however, and appears most impressively in the 'Cantigas à la Vergen Maria' (Songs to the Virgin), which were sung over his grave by priests and acolytes for hundreds of years. They are sometimes melancholy and sometimes joyous, always simple and genuine, and, written in Galician, reflect the trustful piety and happiness of his youth in remote hill provinces where the thought of empire had not penetrated. It was his keen intelligence that expressed itself in the saying popularly attributed to him, «Had I been present at the creation, I might have offered some useful suggestions.» It was his reverent spirit that made mention in his will of the sacred songs as the testimony to his faith. So lived and died Alfonso the Tenth, the father of Spanish literature, and the reviver of Spanish learning.

«WHAT MEANETH A TYRANT, AND HOW HE USETH HIS POWER IN A KINGDOM WHEN HE HATH OBTAINED IT»

«A TYRANT,» says this law, «doth signify a cruel lord, who, by force or by craft, or by treachery, hath obtained power over any realm or country; and such men be of such nature, that when once they have grown strong in the land, they love rather to work their own profit, though it be in harm of the land, than the common profit of all, for they always live in an ill fear of losing it. And that they may be able to fulfill this their purpose unincumbered, the wise of old have said that they use their power against the people in three manners. The first is, that they strive that those under their mastery be ever ignorant and timorous, because, when they be such, they may not be bold to rise against them, nor to resist their wills; and the second is, that they be not kindly and united among themselves, in such wise that they trust not one another, for while they live in disagreement, they shall not dare to make any discourse against their lord, for fear faith and secrecy should not be kept among themselves; and the third way is, that they strive to make them poor, and to put them upon great undertakings, which they never can finish, whereby they may have so much harm that it may never come into their hearts to devise anything against their ruler. And above all this, have tyrants ever striven to make spoil of the strong and to destroy the wise; and have forbidden fellowship and assemblies of men in their land, and striven always to know what men said or did; and do trust their counsel and the guard of their person rather to foreigners, who will serve at their will, than to them of the land, who serve from oppression. And moreover, we say that though any man may have gained mastery of a kingdom by any of the lawful means whereof we have spoken in the laws going before this, yet, if he use his power ill, in the ways whereof we speak in this law, him may the people still call tyrant; for he turneth his mastery which was rightful into wrongful, as Aristotle hath said in the book which treateth of the rule and government of kingdoms."

From 'Las Siete Partidas,' quoted in Ticknor's 'Spanish Literature.'

ON THE TURKS, AND WHY THEY ARE SO CALLED

THE ancient histories which describe the early inhabitants of the East and their various languages show the origin of each tribe or nation, or whence they came, and for what reason they waged war, and how they were enabled to conquer the former lords of the land. Now in these histories it is told that the Turks, and also the allied race called Turcomans, were all of one land originally, and that these names were taken from two rivers which flow through the territory whence these people came, which lies in the direction of the rising of the sun, a little toward the north; and that one of these rivers bore the name of Turco, and the other Mani: and finally that for this reason the two tribes which dwelt on the banks of these two rivers came to be commonly known as Turcomanos or Turcomans. On the other hand, there are those who assert that because a portion of the Turks lived among the Comanos (Comans) they accordingly, in course of time, received the name of Turcomanos; but the majority adhere to the reason already given. However this may be, the Turks and the Turcomans belong both to the same family, and follow no other life than that of wandering over the country, driving their herds from one good pasture to another, and taking with them their wives and their children and all their property, including money as well as flocks.

The Turks did not dwell then in houses, but in tents made of skins, as do in these days the Comanos and Tartars; and when they had to move from one place to another, they divided themselves into companies according to their different dialects, and chose a *cabdillo* (judge), who settled their disputes, and rendered justice to those who deserved it. And this nomadic race cultivated no fields, nor vineyards, nor orchards, nor arable lands of any kind; neither did they buy or sell for money: but traded their flocks among one another, and also their milk and cheese, and pitched their tents in the places where they found the best pasturage; and when the grass was exhausted, they sought fresh herbage elsewhere. And whenever they reached the border of a strange land, they sent before them special envoys, the most worthy and honorable of their men, to the kings or lords of such countries, to ask of them the privilege of pasturage on their lands for a space; for which they were willing to pay such rent or tax as might be agreed upon. After this manner they lived among each nation in whose territory they happened to be.

From ‹La Gran Conquista de Ultramar,› Chapter xiii.

TO THE MONTH OF MARY

From the ‹Cantigas›

WELCOME, O May, yet once again we greet thee!
So alway praise we her, the Holy Mother,
Who prays to God that he shall aid us ever
Against our foes, and to us ever listen.
Welcome, O May! loyally art thou welcome!
So alway praise we her, the Mother of kindness,
Mother who alway on us taketh pity,
Mother who guardeth us from woes unnumbered.
Welcome, O May! welcome, O month well favored!
So let us ever pray and offer praises
To her who ceases not for us, for sinners,
To pray to God that we from woes be guarded.
Welcome, O May! O joyous month and stainless!
So will we ever pray to her who gaineth
Grace from her Son for us, and gives each morning
Force that by us the Moors from Spain are driven.
Welcome, O May, of bread and wine the giver!
Pray then to her, for in her arms, an infant
She bore the Lord! she points us on our journey,
The journey that to her will bear us quickly!

ALFRED THE GREAT

(849–901)

IN THE Ashmolean Museum at Oxford may be seen an antique jewel, consisting of an enameled figure in red, blue, and green, enshrined in a golden frame, and bearing the legend «Ælfred mec heht gewyrcean» (Alfred ordered me made). This was discovered in 1693 in Newton Park, near Athelney, and through it one is enabled to touch the far-away life of a thousand years ago. But greater and more imperishable than this archaic gem is the gift that the noble King left to the English nation—a gift that affects the entire race of English-speaking people. For it was Alfred who laid the foundations for a national literature.

Alfred, the younger son of Ethelwulf, king of the West Saxons, and Osberga, daughter of his cup-bearer, was born in the palace at Wantage in the year 849. He grew up at his father's court, a migratory one, that moved from Kent to Devonshire and from Wales to the Isle of Wight whenever events, raids, or the Witan (Parliament) demanded. At an early age Alfred was sent to pay homage to the Pope in Rome, taking such gifts as rich vessels of gold and silver, silks, and hangings, which show that Saxons lacked nothing in treasure. In 855 Ethelwulf visited Rome with his young son, bearing more costly presents, as well as munificent sums for the shrine of St. Peter's; and returning by way of France, they stopped at the court of Charles the Bold. Once again in his home, young Alfred applied himself to his education. He became a marvel of courage at the chase, proficient in the use of arms, excelled in athletic sports, was zealous in his religious duties, and athirst for knowledge. His accomplishments were many; and when the guests assembled in the great hall to make the walls ring with their laughter over cups of mead and ale, he could take his turn with the harpers and minstrels to improvise one of those sturdy bold ballads that stir the blood to-day with their stately rhythms and noble themes.

Ethelwulf died in 858, and eight years later only two sons, Ethelred and Alfred, were left to cope with the Danish invaders. They won victory after victory, upon which the old chroniclers love to dwell, pausing to describe wild frays among the chalk-hills and dense forests, which afforded convenient places to hide men and to bury spoils.

Ethelred died in 871, and the throne descended to Alfred. His kingdom was in a terrible condition, for Wessex, Kent, Mercia, Sussex, and Surrey lay at the mercy of the marauding enemy. «The land,» says an old writer, «was as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness.» London was in ruins; the Danish standard, with its black Raven, fluttered everywhere; and the forests were filled with outposts and spies of the «pagan army.» There was nothing for the King to do but gather his men and dash into the fray to «let the hard steel ring upon the high helmet.» Time after time the Danes are overthrown, but, like the heads of the fabled Hydra, they grow and flourish after each attack. They have one advantage: they know how to command the sea, and numerous as the waves that their vessels ride so proudly and well, the invaders arrive and quickly land to plunder and slay.

Alfred, although but twenty-five, sees the need for a navy, and in 875 gathers a small fleet to meet the ships of the enemy, wins one prize, and puts the rest to flight. The chroniclers now relate that he fell into disaster and became a fugitive in Selwood Forest, while Guthrum and his host were left free to ravage. From this period date the legends of the King's visit in disguise to the hut of the neat-herd, and his burning the bread he was set to watch; his penetrating into the camp of the Danes and entertaining Guthrum by his minstrelsy while discovering his plans and force; the vision of St. Cuthbert; and the fable of his calling five hundred men by the winding of his horn.

Not long after he was enabled to emerge from the trials of exile in Athelney; and according to Asser, «In the seventh week after Easter, he rode to Egbert's Stone in the eastern part of Selwood or the Great Wood, called in the old British language Coit-mawr. Here he was met by all the neighboring folk of Somersetshire, Wiltshire, and Hampshire, who had not for fear of the Pagans fled beyond the sea; and when they saw the king alive after such great tribulation, they received him, as he deserved, with joy and acclamations and all encamped there for the night.» Soon afterward he made a treaty with the Danes, and became king of the whole of England south of the Thames.

It was now Alfred's work to reorganize his kingdom, to strengthen the coast defenses, to rebuild London, to arrange for a standing army, and to make wise laws for the preservation of order and peace; and when all this was accomplished, he turned his attention to the establishment of monasteries and colleges. «In the meantime,» says old Asser, «the King, during the frequent wars and other trammels of this present life, the invasions of the Pagans, and his own daily infirmities of body, continued to carry on the government, and to exercise hunting in all its branches; to teach his workers in gold and artificers of all kinds, his falconers, hawkers, and dog-keepers, to build houses majestic and good, beyond all the precedents of his ancestors, by his new mechanical inventions, to recite the Saxon books, and more especially to learn by heart the Saxon poems, and to make others learn them also; for he alone never desisted from studying, most diligently, to the best of his ability; he attended the mass and other daily services of religion: he was frequent in psalm-singing and prayer, at the proper hours, both of the night and of the day. He also went to the churches, as we have already said, in the night-time, to pray, secretly and unknown to his courtiers; he bestowed alms and largesses both on his own people and on foreigners of all countries; he was affable and pleasant to all, and curious to investigate things unknown."

As regards Alfred's personal contribution to literature, it may be said that over and above all disputed matters and certain lost works, they represent a most valuable and voluminous assortment due directly to his own royal and scholarly pen. History, secular and churchly, laws and didactic literature, were his field; and though it would seem that his actual period of composition did not much exceed ten years, yet he accomplished a vast deal for any man, especially any busy sovereign and soldier.

An ancient writer, Ethelwerd, says that he translated many books from Latin into Saxon, and William of Malmesbury goes so far as to say that he translated into Anglo-Saxon almost all the literature of Rome. Undoubtedly the general condition of education was deplorable, and Alfred felt this deeply. "Formerly," he writes, "men came hither from foreign lands to seek instruction, and now when we desire it, we can only obtain it from abroad." Like Charlemagne he drew to his court famous scholars, and set many of them to work writing chronicles and translating important Latin books into Anglo-Saxon. Among these was the 'Pastoral Care of Pope Gregory,' to which he wrote the Preface; but with his own hand he translated the 'Consolations of Philosophy,' by Boethius, two manuscripts of which still exist. In this he frequently stops to introduce observations and comments of his own. Of greater value was his translation of the 'History of the World,' by Orosius, which he abridged, and to which he added new chapters giving the record of coasting voyages in the north of Europe. This is preserved in the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum. His fourth translation was the 'Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation,' by Bede. To this last may be added the 'Blossom Gatherings from St. Augustine,' and many minor compositions in prose and verse, translations from the Latin fables and poems, and his own note-book, in which he jots, with what may be termed a journalistic instinct, scenes that he had witnessed, such as Aldhelm standing on the bridge instructing the people on Sunday afternoons; bits of philosophy; and such reflections as the following, which remind one of Marcus Aurelius:—"Desirest thou power? But thou shalt never obtain it without sorrows—sorrows from strange folk, and yet keener sorrows from thine own kindred;" and "Hardship and sorrow! Not a king but would wish to be without these if he could. But I know that he cannot." Alfred's value to literature is this: he placed by the side of Anglo-Saxon poetry,—consisting of two great poems, Cædmon's great song of the 'Creation' and Cynewulf's 'Nativity and Life of Christ,' and the unwritten ballads passed from lip to lip,—four immense translations from Latin into Anglo-Saxon prose, which raised English from a mere spoken dialect to a true language. From his reign date also the famous Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Anglo-Saxon Gospels; and a few scholars are tempted to class the magnificent 'Beowulf' among the works of this period. At any rate, the great literary movement that he inaugurated lasted until the Norman Conquest.

In 893 the Danes once more disturbed King Alfred, but he foiled them at all points, and they left in 897 to harry England no more for several generations. In 901 he died, having reigned for thirty years in the honor and affection of his subjects. Freeman in his 'Norman Conquest' says that "no other man on record has ever so thoroughly united all the virtues both of the ruler and of the private man." Bishop Asser, his contemporary, has left a half-mythical eulogy, and William of Malmesbury, Roger of Wendover, Matthew of Westminster, and John Brompton talk of him fully and freely. Sir John Spellman published a quaint biography in Oxford in 1678, followed by Powell's in 1634, and Bicknell's in 1777. The modern lives are by Giles, Pauli, and Hughes.

KING ALFRED ON KING-CRAFT

Comment in his Translation of Boethius's 'Consolations of Philosophy'

The Mind then answered and thus said: O Reason, indeed thou knowest that covetousness and the greatness of this earthly power never well pleased me, nor did I altogether very much yearn after this earthly authority. But nevertheless I was desirous of materials for the work which I was commanded to perform; that was, that I might honorably and fitly guide and exercise the power which was committed to me. Moreover, thou knowest that no man can show any skill nor exercise or control any power, without tools and materials. There are of every craft the materials without which man cannot exercise the craft. These, then, are a king's materials and his tools to reign with:

that he have his land well peopled; he must have prayer-men, and soldiers, and workmen. Thou knowest that without these tools no king can show his craft. This is also his materials which he must have besides the tools: provisions for the three classes. This is, then, their provision: land to inhabit, and gifts and weapons, and meat, and ale, and clothes, and whatsoever is necessary for the three classes. He cannot without these preserve the tools, nor without the tools accomplish any of those things which he is commanded to perform. Therefore, I was desirous of materials wherewith to exercise the power, that my talents and power should not be forgotten and concealed. For every craft and every power soon becomes old, and is passed over in silence, if it be without wisdom: for no man can accomplish any craft without wisdom. Because whatsoever is done through folly, no one can ever reckon for craft. This is now especially to be said: that I wished to live honorably whilst I lived, and after my life, to leave to the men who were after me, my memory in good works.

ALFRED'S PREFACE TO THE VERSION OF POPE GREGORY'S 'PASTORAL CARE'

KING ALFRED bids greet Bishop Wærferth with his words lovingly and with friendship; and I let it be known to thee that it has very often come into my mind, what wise men there formerly were throughout England, both of sacred and secular orders; and what happy times there were then throughout England; and how the kings who had power of the nation in those days obeyed God and his ministers; and they preserved peace, morality, and order at home, and at the same time enlarged their territory abroad; and how they prospered both with war and with wisdom; and also the sacred orders, how zealous they were, both in teaching and learning, and in all the services they owed to God; and how foreigners came to this land in search of wisdom and instruction, and how we should now have to get them from abroad if we would have them. So general was its decay in England that there were very few on this side of the Humber who could understand their rituals in English, or translate a letter from Latin into English; and I believe there were not many beyond the Humber. There were so few that I cannot remember a single one south of the Thames when

I came to the throne. Thanks be to God Almighty that we have any teachers among us now. And therefore I command thee to do as I believe thou art willing, to disengage thyself from worldly matters as often as thou canst, that thou mayst apply the wisdom which God has given thee wherever thou canst. Consider what punishments would come upon us on account of this world if we neither loved it (wisdom) ourselves nor suffered other men to obtain it: we should love the name only of Christian, and very few of the virtues.

When I considered all this I remembered also how I saw, before it had been all ravaged and burnt, how the churches throughout the whole of England stood filled with treasures and books, and there was also a great multitude of God's servants; but they had very little knowledge of the books, for they could not understand anything of them, because they were not written in their own language. As if they had said, "Our forefathers, who formerly held these places, loved wisdom, and through it they obtained wealth and bequeathed it to us. In this we can still see their tracks, but we cannot follow them, and therefore we have lost both the wealth and the wisdom, because we would not incline our hearts after their example."

When I remembered all this, I wondered extremely that the good and wise men, who were formerly all over England, and had perfectly learnt all the books, did not wish to translate them into their own language. But again, I soon answered myself and said, "They did not think that men would ever be so careless, and that learning would so decay; therefore they abstained from translating, and they trusted that the wisdom in this land might increase with our knowledge of languages."

Then I remember how the law was first known in Hebrew, and again, when the Greeks had learnt it, they translated the whole of it into their own language, and all other books besides. And again, the Romans, when they had learnt it, they translated the whole of it through learned interpreters into their own language. And also all other Christian nations translated a part of them into their own language. Therefore it seems better to me, if ye think so, for us also to translate some books which are most needful for all men to know, into the language which we can all understand, and for you to do as we very easily can if we have tranquillity enough; that is, that all the youth now in England of free men, who are rich enough to be able to devote themselves to it, be set to learn as long as they are not fit for any other occupation, until that they are well able to read English writing: and let those be afterward taught more in the Latin language who are to continue learning and be promoted to a higher rank. When I remember how the knowledge of Latin had formerly decayed throughout England, and yet many could read English writing, I began among other various and manifold troubles of this kingdom, to translate into English the book which is called in Latin 'Pastoralis,' and in English 'Shepherd's Book, sometimes word by word and sometimes according to the sense, as I had learnt it from Plegmund, my archbishop, and Asser, my bishop, and Grimbold, my mass-priest, and John, my mass-priest. And when I had learnt it as I could best understand it, and as I could most clearly interpret it, I translated it into English; and I will send a copy to every bishopric in my kingdom; and on each there is a clasp worth fifty mancus. And I command, in God's name, that no man take the clasp from the book or the book from the minister: it is uncertain how long there may be such learned bishops as now, thanks be to God, there are nearly everywhere; therefore, I wish them always to remain in their place, unless the bishop wish to take them with him, or they be lent out anywhere, or any one make a copy from them.

BLOSSOM GATHERINGS FROM ST. AUGUSTINE

In every tree I saw something there which I needed at home, therefore I advise every one who is able and has many wains, that he trade to the same wood where I cut the stud shafts, and there fetch more for himself and load his wain with fair rods, that he may wind many a neat wall and set many a comely house and build many a fair town of them; and thereby may dwell merrily and softly, so as I now yet have not done. But He who taught me, to whom the wood was agreeable, He may make me to dwell more softly in this temporary cottage, the while that I am in this world, and also in the everlasting home which He has promised us through St. Augustine, and St. Gregory, and St. Jerome, and through other holy fathers; as I believe also that for the merits of all these He will make the way more convenient than it was before, and especially the carrying and the building: but every man wishes after he has built a cottage on his lord's lease by his help, that he may sometimes rest him therein and hunt, and fowl, and fish, and use it every way under the lease both on water and on land, until the time that he earn book-land and everlasting heritage through his lord's mercy. So do enlighten the eyes of my mind so that I may search out the right way to the everlasting home and the everlasting glory, and the everlasting rest which is promised us through those holy fathers. May it be so! . . .

It is no wonder though men swink in timber working, and in the wealthy Giver who wields both these temporary cottages and eternal homes. May He who shaped both and wields both, grant me that I may be meet for each, both here to be profitable and thither to come.

WHERE TO FIND TRUE JOY

From ‘Boethius’

OH! IT is a fault of weight,
Let him think it out who will,
And a danger passing great
Which can thus allure to ill
Careworn men from the rightway,
Swiftly ever led astray.

Will ye seek within the wood
Red gold on the green trees tall?
None, I wot, is wise that could,
For it grows not there at all:
Neither in wine-gardens green
Seek they gems of glittering sheen.

Would ye on some hill-top set,
When ye list to catch a trout,
Or a carp, your fishing-net?
Men, methinks, have long found out
That it would be foolish fare,
For they know they are not there.

In the salt sea can ye find,
When ye list to start an hunt,
With your hounds, the hart or hind?
It will sooner be your wont
In the woods to look, I wot,
Than in seas where they are not.

Is it wonderful to know
That for crystals red or white
One must to the sea-beach go,
Or for other colors bright,
Seeking by the river's side
Or the shore at ebb of tide?

Likewise, men are well aware
Where to look for river-fish;
And all other worldly ware
Where to seek them when they wish;
Wisely careful men will know
Year by year to find them so.

But of all things 'tis most sad
That they foolish are so blind,
So besotted and so mad,
That they cannot surely find
Where the ever-good is nigh
And true pleasures hidden lie.

Therefore, never is their strife
After those true joys to spur;
In this lean and little life
They, half-witted, deeply err
Seeking here their bliss to gain,
That is God Himself in vain.

Ah! I know not in my thought
How enough to blame their sin,
None so clearly as I ought
Can I show their fault within;
For, more bad and vain are they
And more sad than I can say.

All their hope is to acquire
Worship goods and worldly weal;
When they have their mind's desire,
Then such witless Joy they feel,
That in folly they believe
Those True Joys they then receive.

Works of Alfred the Great, Jubilee Edition (Oxford and Cambridge, 1852).

A SORROWFUL FYTTE

From ‹Boethius›

Lo! I sung cheerily
In my bright days,
But now all wearily
Chaunt I my lays;
Sorrowing tearfully,
Saddest of men,
Can I sing cheerfully,
As I could then?

Many a verity
In those glad times
Of my prosperity
Taught I in rhymes;
Now from forgetfulness
Wanders my tongue,
Wasting in fretfulness,
Metres unsung.

Worldliness brought me here
Foolishly blind,
Riches have wrought me here
Sadness of mind;
When I rely on them,
Lo! they depart,—
Bitterly, fie on them!
Rend they my heart.
Why did your songs to me,
World-loving men,
Say joy belongs to me
Ever as then?
Why did ye lyingly
Think such a thing,
Seeing how flyingly
Wealth may take wing?

Works of Alfred the Great, Jubilee Edition (Oxford and Cambridge, 1852).

CHARLES GRANT ALLEN

(1848–)

The Scotch-Canadian naturalist, Charles Grant Blairfindie Allen, who turns his industrious hand with equal facility to scientific writing, to essays, short stories, botanical treatises, biography, and novels, is known to literature as Grant Allen, as «Arbuthnot Wilson,» and as «Cecil Power.»

His work may be divided into two classes: fiction and popular essays. The first shows the author to be familiar with varied scenes and types, and exhibits much feeling for dramatic situations. His list of novels is long, and includes among others, ‘Strange Stories,’ ‘Babylon,’ ‘This Mortal Coil,’ ‘The Tents of Shem,’ ‘The Great Taboo,’ ‘Recalled to Life,’ ‘The Woman Who Did,’ and ‘The British Barbarians.’ In many of these books he has woven his plots around a psychological theme; a proof that science interests him more than invention. His essays are written for unscientific readers, and carefully avoid all technicalities and tedious discussions. Most persons, he says, «would much rather learn why birds have feathers than why they have a keeled sternum, and they think the origin of bright flowers far more attractive than the origin of monocotyledonous seeds or esogenous stems.»

Grant Allen was born in Kingston, Canada, February 24th, 1848. After graduation at Merton College, Oxford, he occupied for four years the chair of logic and philosophy at Queen's College, Spanish Town, Jamaica, which he resigned to settle in England, where he now resides. Early in his career he became an enthusiastic follower of Darwin and Herbert Spencer, and published the attractive books entitled ‘Science in Arcady,’ ‘Vignettes from Nature,’ ‘The Evolutionist at Large,’ and ‘Colin Clout's Calendar.’ In his preface to ‘Vignettes from Nature,’ he says that the «essays are written from an easy-going, half-scientific half-æsthetic standpoint.» In this spirit he rambles in the woods, in the meadows, at the seaside, or upon the heather-carpeted moor, finding in such expeditions material and suggestions for his lightly moving essays, which expound the problems of Nature according to the theories of his acknowledged masters. A fallow deer grazing in a forest, a wayside berry, a guelder rose, a sportive butterfly, a bed of nettles, a falling leaf, a mountain tarn, the hole of a hedgehog, a darting humming-bird, a ripening plum, a clover-blossom, a spray of sweet-briar, a handful of wild thyme, or a blaze of scarlet geranium before a cottage door, furnish him with a text for the discussion of «those biological and cosmical doctrines which have revolutionized the thought of the nineteenth century," as he says in substance.

Somewhat more scientific are 'Psychological Æsthetics,' 'The Color Sense,' 'The Color of Flowers,' and 'Flowers and their Pedigrees'; and still deeper is 'Force and Energy' (1888), a theory of dynamics in which he expresses original views. In 'Psychological Æsthetics' (1877), he first seeks to explain "such simple pleasures in bright color, sweet sound, or rude pictorial imitation as delight the child and the savage, proceeding from these elementary principles to the more and more complex gratifications of natural scenery, painting, and poetry." In 'The Color Sense' he defines all that we do not owe to the color sense, for example the rainbow, the sunset, the sky, the green or purple sea, the rocks, the foliage of trees and shrubs, hues of autumn, effects of iridescent light, or tints of minerals and precious stones; and all that we do owe, namely, "the beautiful flowers of the meadow and the garden-roses, lilies, cowslips, and daisies; the exquisite pink of the apple, the peach, the mango, and the cherry, with all the diverse artistic wealth of oranges, strawberries, plums, melons, brambleberries, and pomegranates; the yellow, blue, and melting green of tropical butterflies; the magnificent plumage of the toucan, the macaw, the cardinal-bird, the lory, and the honey-sucker; the red breast of our homely robin; the silver or ruddy fur of the ermine, the wolverene, the fox, the squirrel, and the chinchilla; the rosy cheeks and pink lips of the English maiden; the whole catalogue of dyes, paints, and pigments; and last of all, the colors of art in every age and nation, from the red cloth of the South Seas, the lively frescoes of the Egyptian and the subdued tones of Hellenic painters, to the stained windows of Poictiers and the Madonna of the Sistine Chapel." Besides these books, Mr. Allen has written for the series called 'English Worthies' a sympathetic 'Life of Charles Darwin' (1885).

THE COLORATION OF FLOWERS

From 'The Colors of Flowers'

The different hues assumed by petals are all thus, as it were, laid up beforehand in the tissues of the plant, ready to be brought out at a moment's notice. And all flowers, as we know, easily sport a little in color. But the question is, Do their changes tend to follow any regular and definite order? Is there any reason to believe that the modification runs from any one color toward any other? Apparently there is. The general conclusion to be set forth in this work is the statement of such a tendency. All flowers, it would seem, were in their earliest form yellow; then some of them became white; after that, a few of them grew to be red or purple; and finally, a comparatively small number acquired various shades of lilac, mauve, violet, or blue. So that if this principle be true, such a flower as the harebell will represent one of the most highly developed lines of descent; and its ancestors will have passed successively through all the intermediate stages. Let us see what grounds can be given for such a belief.

Some hints of a progressive law in the direction of a color-change from yellow to blue are sometimes afforded to us even by the successive stages of a single flower. For example, one of our common little English forget-me-nots, *Myosotis versicolor*, is pale yellow when it first opens; but as it grows older, it becomes faintly pinkish, and ends by being blue, like the others of its race. Now, this sort of color-change is by no means uncommon; and in almost all known cases it is always in the same direction, from yellow or white, through pink, orange, or red, to purple or blue. For example, one of the wall-flowers, *Cheiranthus chamæleo*, has at first a whitish flower, then a citron-yellow, and finally emerges into red or violet. The petals of *Stytidium fructicosum* are pale yellow to begin with, and afterward become light rose-colored. An evening primrose, *Œnothera tetraptera*, has white flowers in its first stage, and red ones at a later period of development. *Cobea scandens* goes from white to violet; *Hibiscus mutabilis* from white through flesh-colored to red. The common Virginia stock of our gardens (*Malcolmia*) often opens of a pale yellowish green, then becomes faintly pink; afterward deepens into bright red; and fades away at the last into mauve or blue. Fritz Müller's *Lantana* is yellow on its first day, orange on its second, and purple on the third. The whole family of *Boraginaceæ* begin by being pink and end with being blue. The garden convolvulus opens a blushing white and passes into full purple. In all these and many other cases the general direction of the changes is the same. They are usually set down as due to varying degrees of oxidation in the pigmentary matter. If this be so, there is a good reason why bees should be specially fond of blue, and why blue flowers should be specially adapted for fertilization by their aid. For Mr. A. R. Wallace has shown that color is most apt to appear or to vary in those parts of plants or animals which have undergone the highest amount of modification. The markings of the peacock and the argus pheasant come out upon their immensely developed secondary tail-feathers or wing-plumes; the metallic hues of sun-birds, or humming-birds, show themselves upon their highly specialized crests, gorgets, or lappets. It is the same with the hackles of fowls, the head ornaments of fruit-pigeons, and the bills of toucans. The most exquisite colors in the insect world are those which are developed on the greatly expanded and delicately feathered wings of butterflies; and the eye-spots which adorn a few species are usually found on their very highly modified swallow-tail appendages. So too with flowers: those which have undergone most modification have their colors most profoundly altered. In this way, we may put it down as a general rule (to be tested hereafter) that the least developed flowers are usually yellow or white; those which have undergone a little more modification are usually pink or red; and those which have been most highly specialized of any are usually purple, lilac, or blue. Absolute deep ultramarine probably marks the highest level of all.

On the other hand, Mr. Wallace's principle also explains why the bees and butterflies should prefer these specialized colors to all others, and should therefore select those flowers which display them by preference over any less developed types; for bees and butterflies are the most highly adapted of all insects to honey-seeking and flower-feeding. They have themselves on their side undergone the largest amount of specialization for that particular function. And if the more specialized and modified flowers, which gradually fitted their forms and the position of their honey-glands to the forms of the bees or butterflies, showed a natural tendency to pass from yellow through pink and red to purple and blue, it would follow that the insects which were being evolved side by side with them, and which were aiding at the same time in their evolution, would grow to recognize these developed colors as the visible symbols of those flowers from which they could obtain the largest amount of honey with the least possible trouble. Thus it would finally result that the ordinary unspecialized flowers, which depended upon small insect riff-raff, would be mostly left yellow or white; those which appealed to rather higher insects would become pink or red; and those which laid themselves out for bees or butterflies, the aristocrats of the arthropodous world, would grow for the most part to be purple or blue.

Now, this is very much what we actually find to be the case in nature. The simplest and earliest flowers are those with regular, symmetrical open cups, like the *Ranunculus* genus, the *Potentillas*, and the *Alsine* or chickweeds, which can be visited by any insects whatsoever; and these are in large part yellow or white. A little higher are flowers like the Campions or *Sileneæ*, and the stocks (*Matthiola*), with more or less closed cups, whose honey can only be reached by more specialized insects; and these are oftener pink or reddish. More profoundly modified are those irregular one-sided flowers, like the violets, peas, and orchids, which have assumed special shapes to accommodate bees and other specific honey-seekers; and these are often purple and not unfrequently blue. Highly specialized in another way are the flowers like harebells (*Campanulaceæ*), scabious (*Dipsaceæ*), and heaths (*Ericaceæ*), whose petals have all coalesced into a tubular corolla; and these might almost be said to be usually purple or blue. And finally, highest of all are the flowers like labiates (rosemary, *Salvia*, etc.) and speedwells (*Veronica*), whose tubular corolla has been turned to one side, thus combining the united petals with the irregular shape; and these are almost invariably purple or blue.

AMONG THE HEATHER

From 'The Evolutionist at Large'

I SUPPOSE even that apocryphal person, the general reader, would be insulted at being told at this hour of the day that all bright-colored flowers are fertilized by the visits of insects, whose attentions they are specially designed to solicit. Everybody has heard over and over again that roses, orchids, and columbines have acquired their honey to allure the friendly bee, their gaudy petals to advertise the honey, and their divers shapes to insure the proper fertilization by the correct type of insect. But everybody does not know how specifically certain blossoms have laid themselves out for a particular species of fly, beetle, or tiny moth. Here on the higher downs, for instance, most flowers are exceptionally large and brilliant; while all Alpine climbers must have noticed that the most gorgeous masses of bloom in Switzerland occur just below the snow-line. The reason is, that such blossoms must be fertilized by butterflies alone. Bees, their great rivals in honey-sucking, frequent only the lower meadows and slopes, where flowers are many and small: they seldom venture far from the hive or the nest among the high peaks and chilly nooks where we find those great patches of blue gentian or purple anemone, which hang like monstrous breadths of tapestry upon the mountain sides. This heather here, now fully opening in the warmer sun of the southern counties — it is still but in the bud among the Scotch hills, I doubt not — specially lays itself out for the humble-bee, and its masses form almost his highest pasture-grounds; but the butterflies — insect vagrants that they are — have no fixed home, and they therefore stray far above the level at which bee-blossoms altogether cease to grow. Now, the butterfly differs greatly from the bee in his mode of honey-hunting: he does not bustle about in a business-like manner from one buttercup or dead-nettle to its nearest fellow; but he flits joyously, like a sauntering straggler that he is, from a great patch of color here to another great patch at a distance, whose gleam happens to strike his roving eye by its size and brilliancy. Hence, as that indefatigable observer, Dr. Hermann Müller, has noticed, all Alpine or hill-top flowers have very large and conspicuous blossoms, generally grouped together in big clusters so as to catch a passing glance of the butterfly's eye. As soon as the insect spies such a cluster, the color seems to act as a stimulant to his broad wings, just as the candle-light does to those of his cousin the moth. Off he sails at once, as if by automatic action, towards the distant patch, and there both robs the plant of its honey, and at the same time carries to it on his legs and head fertilizing pollen from the last of its congeners which he favored with a call. For of course both bees and butterflies stick on the whole to a single species at a time; or else the flowers would only get uselessly hybridized, instead of being impregnated with pollen from other plants of their own kind. For this purpose' it is that most plants lay themselves out to secure the attention of only two or three varieties among their insect allies, while they make their nectaries either too deep or too shallow for the convenience of all other kinds.

Insects, however, differ much from one another in their æsthetic tastes, and flowers are adapted accordingly to the varying fancies of the different kinds. Here, for example, is a spray of common white galium, which attracts and is fertilized by small flies, who generally frequent white blossoms. But here again, not far off, I find a luxuriant mass of the yellow species, known by the quaint name of "lady's-bedstraw,"—a legacy from the old legend which represents it as having formed Our Lady's bed in the manger at Bethlehem. Now why has this kind of galium yellow flowers, while its near kinsman yonder has them snowy white? The reason is that lady's-bedstraw is fertilized by small beetles; and beetles are known to be one among the most color-loving races of insects. You may often find one of their number, the lovely bronze and golden-mailed rose-chafer, buried deeply in the very centre of a red garden rose, and reeling about when touched as if drunk with pollen and honey. Almost all the flowers which beetles frequent are consequently brightly decked in scarlet or yellow. On the other hand, the whole family of the umbellates, those tall plants with level bunches of tiny blossoms, like the fool's-parsley, have all but universally white petals; and Müller, the most statistical of naturalists, took the trouble to count the number of insects which paid them a visit. He found that only fourteen per cent. were bees, while the remainder consisted mainly of miscellaneous small flies and other arthropodous riff-raff, whereas, in the brilliant class of composites, including the asters, sunflowers, daisies, dandelions, and thistles, nearly seventy-five per cent. of the visitors were steady, industrious bees. Certain dingy blossoms which lay themselves out to attract wasps are obviously adapted, as Müller quaintly remarks, "to a less æsthetically cultivated circle of visitors." But the most brilliant among all insect-fertilized flowers are those which specially affect the society of butterflies; and they are only surpassed in this respect throughout all nature by the still larger and more magnificent tropical species which owe their fertilization to humming-birds and brush-tongued lories.

Is it not a curious, yet a comprehensible circumstance, that the tastes which thus show themselves in the development, by natural selection, of lovely flowers, should also show themselves in the marked preference for beautiful mates? Poised on yonder sprig of harebell stands a little purple-winged butterfly, one of the most exquisite among our British kinds. That little butterfly owes its own rich and delicately shaded tints to the long selective action of a million generations among its ancestors. So we find throughout that the most beautifully colored birds and insects are always those which have had most to do with the production of bright-colored fruits and flowers. The butterflies and rose-beetles are the most gorgeous among insects; the humming-birds and parrots are the most gorgeous among birds. Nay, more, exactly like effects have been produced in two hemispheres on different tribes by the same causes. The plain brown swifts of the North have developed among tropical West Indian and South American orchids the metallic gorgets and crimson crests of the humming-bird; while a totally unlike group of Asiatic birds have developed among the rich flora of India and the Malay Archipelago the exactly similar plumage of the exquisite sun-birds. Just as bees depend upon flowers, and flowers upon bees, so the color-sense of animals has created the bright petals of blossoms; and the bright petals have reacted upon the tastes of the animals themselves, and through their tastes upon their own appearance.

THE HERON'S HAUNT

From ‹Vignettes from Nature›

Most of the fields on the country-side are now laid up for hay, or down in the tall haulming corn; and so I am driven from my accustomed botanizing grounds on the open, and compelled to take refuge in the wild bosky moorland back of Hole Common. Here, on the edge of the copse, the river widens to a considerable pool, and coming upon it softly through the wood from behind — the boggy, moss-covered ground masking and muffling my foot-fall — I have surprised a great, graceful ash-and-white heron, standing all unconscious on the shallow bottom, in the very act of angling for minnows. The heron is a somewhat rare bird among the more cultivated parts of England; but just hereabouts we get a sight of one not infrequently, for they still breed in a few tall ash-trees at Chilcombe Park, where the lords of the manor in mediæval times long preserved a regular heronry to provide sport for their hawking. There is no English bird, not even the swan, so perfectly and absolutely graceful as the heron. I am leaning now breathless and noiseless against the gate, taking a good look at him, as he stands half-knee deep on the oozy bottom, with his long neck arched over the water, and his keen purple eye fixed eagerly upon the fish below. Though I am still twenty yards from where he poises lightly on his stilted legs, I can see distinctly his long pendent snow-white breast-feathers, his crest of waving black plumes, falling loosely backward over the ash-gray neck, and even the bright red skin of his bare legs just below the feathered thighs. I dare hardly move nearer to get a closer view of his beautiful plumage; and still I will try. I push very quietly through the gate, but not quite quietly enough for the heron. One moment he raises his curved neck and poises his head a little on one side to listen for the direction of the rustling; then he catches a glimpse of me as I try to draw back silently behind a clump of flags and nettles; and in a moment his long legs give him a good spring from the bottom, his big wings spread with a sudden flap skywards, and almost before I can note what is happening he is off and away to leeward, making a bee-line for the high trees that fringe the artificial water in Chilcombe Hollow.

All these wading birds — the herons, the cranes, the bitterns, the snipes, and the plovers — are almost necessarily, by the very nature of their typical conformation, beautiful and graceful in form. Their tall, slender legs, which they require for wading, their comparatively light and well-poised bodies, their long, curved, quickly-darting necks and sharp beaks, which they need in order to secure their rapid-swimming prey,— all these things make the waders, almost in spite of themselves, handsome and shapely birds. Their feet, it is true, are generally rather large and sprawling, with long, wide-spread toes, so as to distribute their weight on the snow-shoe principle, and prevent them from sinking in the deep soft mud on which they tread; but then we seldom see the feet, because the birds, when we catch a close view of them at all, are almost always either on stilts in the water, or flying with their legs tucked behind them, after their pretty rudder-like fashion. I have often wondered whether it is this general beauty of form in the waders which has turned their æsthetic tastes, apparently, into such a sculpturesque line. Certainly, it is very noteworthy that whenever among this particular order of birds we get clear evidence of ornamental devices, such as Mr. Darwin sets down to long-exerted selective preferences in the choice of mates, the ornaments are almost always those of form rather than those of color.

The waders, I sometimes fancy, only care for beauty of shape, not for beauty of tint. As I stood looking at the heron here just now, the same old idea seemed to force itself more clearly than ever upon my mind. The decorative adjuncts — the curving tufted crest on the head, the pendent silvery gorget on the neck, the long ornamental quills of the pinions — all look exactly as if they were deliberately intended to emphasize and heighten the natural gracefulness of the heron's form. May it not be, I ask myself, that these birds, seeing one another's statuesque shape from generation to generation, have that shape hereditarily implanted upon the nervous system of the species, in connection with all their ideas of mating and of love, just as the human form is hereditarily associated with all our deepest emotions, so that Miranda falling in love at first sight with Ferdinand is not a mere poetical fiction, but the true illustration of a psychological fact? And as on each of our minds and brains the picture of the beautiful human figure is, as it were, antecedently engraved, may not the ancestral type be similarly engraved on the minds and brains of the wading birds? If so, would it not be natural to conclude that these birds, having thus a very graceful form as their generic standard of taste, a graceful form with little richness of coloring, would naturally choose as the loveliest among their mates, not those which showed any tendency to more bright-hued plumage (which indeed might be fatal to their safety, by betraying them to their enemies, the falcons and eagles), but those which most fully embodied and carried furthest the ideal specific gracefulness of the wading type? . . .

Forestine flower-feeders and fruit-eaters, especially in the tropics, are almost always brightly colored. Their chromatic taste seems to get quickened in their daily search for food among the beautiful blossoms and brilliant fruits of southern woodlands. Thus the humming-birds, the sun-birds, and the brush-tongued lories, three very dissimilar groups of birds as far as descent is concerned, all alike feed upon the honey and the insects which they extract from the large tubular bells of tropical flowers; and all alike are noticeable for their intense metallic lustre or pure tones of color. Again, the parrots, the toucans, the birds of paradise, and many other of the more beautiful exotic species, are fruit-eaters, and reflect their inherited taste in their own gaudy plumage. But the waders have no such special reasons for acquiring a love for bright hues. Hence their æsthetic feeling seems rather to have taken a turn toward the further development of their own graceful forms. Even the plainest wading birds have a certain natural elegance of shape which supplies a primitive basis for æsthetic selection to work on.

JAMES LANE ALLEN

(1850–)

The literary work of James Lane Allen was begun with maturer powers and wider culture than most writers exhibit in their first publications. His mastery of English was acquired with difficulty, and his knowledge of Latin he obtained through years of instruction as well as of study. The wholesome open-air atmosphere which pervades his stories, their pastoral character and love of nature, come from the tastes bequeathed to him by three generations of paternal ancestors, easy-going gentlemen farmers of the blue-grass region of Kentucky. On a farm near Lexington, in this beautiful country of stately homes, fine herds, and great flocks, the author was born, and there he spent his childhood and youth.

About 1885 he came to New York to devote himself to literature; for though he had contributed poems, essays, and criticisms to leading periodicals, his first important work was a series of articles descriptive of the «Blue-Grass Region,» published in Harper's Magazine. The field was new, the work was fresh, and the author's ability was at once recognized. Inevitably he chose Kentucky for the scene of his stories, knowing and loving, as he did, her characteristics and her history. While preparing his articles on ‹The Blue-Grass Region,› he had studied the Trappist Monastery and the Convent of Loretto, as well as the records of the Catholic Church in Kentucky; and his first stories, ‹The White Cowl› and ‹Sister Dolorosa,› which appeared in the Century Magazine, were the first fruits of this labor. A controversy arose as to the fairness of these portraitures; but however opinions may differ as to his characterization, there can be no question of the truthfulness of the exposition of the mediæval spirit of those retreats.

This tendency to use a historic background marks most of Mr. Allen's stories. In ‹The Choir Invisible,› a tale of the last century, pioneer Kentucky once more exists. The old clergyman of ‹Flute and Violin› lived and died in Lexington, and had been long forgotten when his story «touched the vanishing halo of a hard and saintly life.» The old negro preacher, with texts embroidered on his coat-tails, was another figure of reality, unnoticed until he became one of the ‹Two Gentlemen of Kentucky.› In Lexington lived and died «King Solomon,» who had almost faded from memory when his historian found the record of the poor vagabond's heroism during the plague, and made it memorable in a story that touches the heart and fills the eyes. ‹A Kentucky Cardinal,› with ‹Aftermath,› its second part, is full of history and of historic personages. ‘Summer in Arcady: A Tale of Nature,’ the latest of Mr. Allen's stories, is no less based on local history and no less full of local color than his other tales, notwithstanding its general unlikeness.

This book sounds a deeper note than the earlier tales, although the truth which Mr. Allen sees is not mere fidelity to local types, but the essential truth of human nature. His realism has always a poetic aspect. Quiet, reserved, out of the common, his books deal with moods rather than with actions; their problems are spiritual rather than physical; their thought tends toward the higher and more difficult way of life.

A COURTSHIP

From ‘Summer in Arcady’

The sunlight grew pale the following morning; a shadow crept rapidly over the blue; bolts darted about the skies like maddened redbirds; the thunder, ploughing its way down the dome as along zigzag cracks in the stony street, filled the caverns of the horizon with reverberations that shook the earth; and the rain was whirled across the landscape in long, white, wavering sheets. Then all day quiet and silence throughout Nature except for the drops, tapping high and low the twinkling leaves; except for the new melody of woodland and meadow brooks, late silvery and with a voice only for their pebbles and moss and mint, but now yellow and brawling and leaping back into the grassy channels that were their old-time beds; except for the indoor music of dripping eaves and rushing gutters and overflowing rain-barrels. And when at last in the gold of the cool west the sun broke from the edge of the gray, over what a green, soaked, fragrant world he reared the arch of Nature's peace!

Not a little blade of corn in the fields but holds in an emerald vase its treasures of white gems. The hemp-stalks bend so low under the weight of their plumes, that were a vesper sparrow to alight on one for his evening hymn, it would go with him to the ground. The leaning barley and rye and wheat flash in the last rays their jeweled beards. Under the old apple-trees, golden-brown mushrooms are already pushing upward through the leaf-loam, rank with many an autumn's dropping. About the yards the peonies fall with faces earthward. In the stable-lots the larded porkers, with bristles as clean as frost,

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Photogravure from Painting by H. Vogler.

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and flesh of pinky whiteness, are hunting with nervous nostrils for the lush purslain. The fowls are driving their bills up and down their wet breasts. And the farmers who have been shelling corn for the mill come out of their barns, with their coats over their shoulders, on the way to supper, look about for the plough-horses, and glance at the western sky, from which the last drops are falling.

But soon only a more passionate heat shoots from the sun into the planet. The plumes of the hemp are so dry again, that by the pollen shaken from their tops you can trace the young rabbits making their way out to the dusty paths. The shadows of white clouds sail over purple stretches of blue-grass, hiding the sun from the steady eye of the turkey, whose brood is spread out before her like a fan on the earth. At early morning the neighing of the stallions is heard around the horizon; at noon the bull makes the deep, hot pastures echo with his majestic summons; out in the blazing meadows the butterflies strike the afternoon air with more impatient wings; under the moon all night the play of ducks and drakes goes on along the margins of the ponds. Young people are running away and marrying; middle-aged farmers surprise their wives by looking in on them at their butter-making in the sweet dairies; and Nature is lashing everything — grass, fruit, insects, cattle, human creatures — more fiercely onward to the fulfillment of her ends. She is the great heartless haymaker, wasting not a ray of sunshine on a clod, but caring naught for the light that beats upon a throne, and holding man and woman, with their longing for immortality, and their capacities for joy and pain, as of no more account than a couple of fertilizing nasturtiums.

The storm kept Daphne at home. On the next day the earth was yellow with sunlight, but there were puddles along the path, and a branch rushing swollen across the green valley in the fields. On the third, her mother took the children to town to be fitted with hats and shoes, and Daphne also, to be freshened up with various moderate adornments, in view of a protracted meeting soon to begin. On the fourth, some ladies dropped in to spend the day, bearing in mind the episode at the dinner, and having grown curious to watch events accordingly. On the fifth, her father carried out the idea of cutting down some cedar-trees in the front yard for fence posts; and whenever he was working about the house, he kept her near to wait on him in unnecessary ways. On the sixth, he rode away with two hands and an empty wagon-bed for some work on the farm; her mother drove off to another dinner — dinners never cease in Kentucky, and the wife of an elder is not free to decline invitations; and at last she was left alone in the front porch, her face turned with burning eagerness toward the fields. In a little while she had slipped away.

All these days Hilary had been eager to see her. He was carrying a good many girls in his mind that summer; none in his heart; but his plans concerning these latter were for the time forgotten. He hung about that part of his farm from which he could have descried her in the distance. Each forenoon and afternoon, at the usual hour of her going to her uncle's, he rode over and watched for her. Other people passed to and fro,— children and servants,— but not Daphne; and repeated disappointments fanned his desire to see her.

When she came into sight at last, he was soon walking beside her, leading his horse by the reins.

« I have been waiting to see you, Daphne," he said, with a smile, but general air of seriousness. « I have been waiting a long time for a chance to talk to you."

« And I have wanted to see you," said Daphne, her face turned away and her voice hardly to be heard. « I have been waiting for a chance to talk to you."

The change in her was so great, so unexpected, it contained an appeal to him so touching, that he glanced quickly at her. Then he stopped short and looked searchingly around the meadow.

The thorn-tree is often the only one that can survive on these pasture lands. Its spikes, even when it is no higher than the grass, keep off the mouths of grazing stock. As it grows higher, birds see it standing solitary in the distance and fly to it, as a resting-place in passing. Some autumn day a seed of the wild grape is thus dropped near its root; and in time the thorn-tree and the grape-vine come to thrive together.

As Hilary now looked for some shade to which they could retreat from the blinding, burning sunlight, he saw one of these standing off at a distance of a few hundred yards. He slipped the bridle-reins through the head-stall, and giving his mare a soft slap on the shoulder, turned her loose to graze.

« Come over here and sit down out of the sun," he said, starting off in his authoritative way. « I want to talk to you."

Daphne followed in his wake, through the deep grass.

When they reached the tree, they sat down under the rayless boughs. Some sheep lying there ran round to the other side and stood watching them, with a frightened look in their clear, peaceful eyes.

« What's the matter? » he said, fanning his face, and tugging with his forefinger to loosen his shirt collar from his moist neck. He had the manner of a powerful comrade who means to succor a weaker one.

« Nothing, » said Daphne, like a true woman.

« Yes, but there is, » he insisted. « I got you into trouble. I didn't think of that when I asked you to dance. »

« You had nothing to do with it, » retorted Daphne, with a flash. « I danced for spite. »

He threw back his head with a peal of laughter. All at once this was broken off. He sat up, with his eyes fixed on the lower edge of the meadow.

« Here comes your father, » he said gravely.

Daphne turned. Her father was riding slowly through the bars. A wagon-bed loaded with rails crept slowly after him.

In an instant the things that had cost her so much toil and so many tears to arrange, — her explanations, her justifications, and her parting, — all the reserve and the coldness that she had laid up in her heart, as one fills high a little ice-house with fear of far-off summer heat, — all were quite gone, melted away. And everything that he had planned to tell her was forgotten also at the sight of that stern figure on horseback bearing unconsciously down upon them.

« If I had only kept my mouth shut about his old fences, » he said to himself. « Confound my bull! » and he looked anxiously at Daphne, who sat with her eyes riveted on her father. The next moment she had turned, and they were laughing in each other's faces.

« What shall I do? » she cried, leaning over and burying her face in her hands, and lifting it again, scarlet with excitement.

« Don't do anything, » he said calmly.

« But Hilary, if he sees us, we are lost. »

« If he sees us, we are found. »

« But he mustn't see me here! » she cried, with something like real terror. « I believe I'll lie down in the grass. Maybe he'll think I am a friend of yours. »

« My friends all sit up in the grass,» said Hilary.

But Daphne had already hidden.

Many a time, when a little girl, she had amused herself by screaming like a hawk at the young guineas, and seeing them cuddle invisible under small tufts and weeds. Out in the stable lot, where the grass was grazed so close that the geese could barely nip it, she would sometimes get one of the negro men to scare the little pigs, for the delight of seeing them squat as though hidden, when they were no more hidden than if they had spread themselves out upon so many dinner dishes. All of us reveal traces of this primitive instinct upon occasion. Daphne was doing her best to hide now.

When Hilary realized it he moved in front of her, screening her as well as possible.

«Hadn't you better lie down, too?» she asked.

«No,» he replied quickly.

«But if he sees you, he might take a notion to ride over this way!»

«Then he'll have to ride.»

«But, Hilary, suppose he were to find me lying down here behind you, hiding?»

«Then he'll have to find you.»

«You get me into trouble, and then you won't help me out!» exclaimed Daphne with considerable heat.

«It might not make matters any better for me to hide,» he answered quietly. «But if he comes over here and tries to get us into trouble, I'll see then what I can do.»

Daphne lay silent for a moment, thinking. Then she nestled more closely down, and said with gay, unconscious archness: «I'm not hiding because I'm afraid of him. I'm doing it just because I want to.»

She did not know that the fresh happiness flushing her at that moment came from the fact of having Hilary between herself and her father as a protector; that she was drinking in the delight a woman feels in getting playfully behind the man she loves in the face of danger: but her action bound her to him and brought her more under his influence.

His words showed that he also felt his position, — the position of the male who stalks forth from the herd and stands the silent challenger. He was young, and vain of his manhood in the usual innocent way that led him to carry the chip on his shoulder for the world to knock off; and he placed himself before Daphne with the understanding that if they were discovered, there would be trouble. Her father was a violent man, and the circumstances were not such that any Kentucky father would overlook them. But with his inward seriousness, his face wore its usual look of reckless unconcern.

«Is he coming this way?» asked Daphne, after an interval of impatient waiting.

«Straight ahead. Are you hid?»

«I can't see whether I'm hid or not. Where is he now?»

«Right on us.»

«Does he see you?»

«Yes.»

«Do you think he sees me?»

«I'm sure of it.»

«Then I might as well get up,» said Daphne, with the courage of despair, and up she got. Her father was riding along the path in front of them, but not looking. She was down again like a partridge.

«How could you fool me, Hilary? Suppose he *had* been looking!»

«I wonder what he thinks I'm doing, sitting over here in the grass like a stump,» said Hilary. «If he takes me for one, he must think I've got an awful lot of roots.»

«Tell me when it's time to get up.»

«I will.»

He turned softly toward her. She was lying on her side, with her burning cheek in one hand. The other hand rested high on the curve of her hip. Her braids had fallen forward, and lay in a heavy loop about her lovely shoulders. Her eyes were closed, her scarlet lips parted in a smile. The edges of her snow-white petticoats showed beneath her blue dress, and beyond these one of her feet and ankles. Nothing more fragrant with innocence ever lay on the grass.

«Is it time to get up now?»

«Not yet,» and he sat bending over her.

«Now?»

«Not yet,» he repeated more softly.

«Now, then?»

«Not for a long time.»

His voice thrilled her, and she glanced up at him. His laughing eyes were glowing down upon her under his heavy mat of hair. She sat up and looked toward the wagon crawling away in the distance; her father was no longer in sight.

One of the ewes, dissatisfied with a back view, stamped her forefoot impatiently, and ran round in front, and out into the sun. Her lambs followed, and the three, ranging themselves abreast, stared at Daphne, with a look of helpless inquiry.

« Sh-pp-pp! » she cried, throwing up her hands at them, irritated. « Go away! »

They turned and ran; the others followed; and the whole number, falling into line, took a path meekly homeward. They left a greater sense of privacy under the tree. Several yards off was a small stock-pond. Around the edge of this the water stood hot and green in the tracks of the cattle and the sheep, and about these pools the yellow butterflies were thick, alighting daintily on the promontories of the mud, or rising two by two through the dazzling atmosphere in columns of enamored flight.

Daphne leaned over to the blue grass where it swayed unbroken in the breeze, and drew out of their sockets several stalks of it, bearing on their tops the purplish seed-vessels. With them she began to braid a ring about one of her fingers in the old simple fashion of the country.

As they talked, he lay propped on his elbow, watching her fingers, the soft slow movements of which little by little wove a spell over his eyes. And once again the power of her beauty began to draw him beyond control. He felt a desire to seize her hands, to crush them in his. His eyes passed upward along her tapering wrists, the skin of which was like mother-of-pearl; upward along the arm to the shoulder — to her neck — to her deeply crimsoned cheeks — to the purity of her brow — to the purity of her eyes, the downcast lashes of which hid them like conscious fringes.

An awkward silence began to fall between them. Daphne felt that the time had come for her to speak. But, powerless to begin, she feigned to busy herself all the more devotedly with braiding the deep-green circlet. Suddenly he drew himself through the grass to her side.

« Let *me!* »

« No! » she cried, lifting her arm above his reach and looking at him with a gay threat. « You don't know how. »

« I do know how, » he said, with his white teeth on his red underlip, and his eyes sparkling; and reaching upward, he laid his hand in the hollow of her elbow and pulled her arm down.

«No! No!» she cried again, putting her hands behind her back. «You will spoil it!»

«I will not spoil it,» he said, moving so close to her that his breath was on her face, and reaching round to unclasp her hands.

«No! No! No!» she cried, bending away from him. I don't want any ring!» and she tore it from her finger and threw it out on the grass. Then she got up, and, brushing the grass-seed off her lap, put on her hat.

He sat cross-legged on the grass before her. He had put on his hat, and the brim hid his eyes.

«And you are not going to stay and talk to me?» he said in a tone of reproachfulness, without looking up.

She was excited and weak and trembling, and so she put out her hand and took hold of a strong loop of the grape-vine hanging from a branch of the thorn, and laid her cheek against her hand and looked away from him.

«I thought you were better than the others,» he continued, with the bitter wisdom of twenty years. «But you women are all alike. When a man gets into trouble, you desert him. You hurry him on to the devil. I have been turned out of the church, and now you are down on me. Oh, well! But you know how much I have always liked you, Daphne.»

It was not the first time he had acted this character. It had been a favorite rôle. But Daphne had never seen the like. She was overwhelmed with happiness that he cared so much for her; and to have him reproach her for indifference, and see him suffering with the idea that she had turned against him—that instantly changed the whole situation. He had not heard then what had taken place at the dinner. Under the circumstances, feeling certain that the secret of her love had not been discovered, she grew emboldened to risk a little more.

So she turned toward him smiling, and swayed gently as she clung to the vine.

«Yes; I have my orders not even to speak to you! Never again!» she said, with the air of tantalizing.

«Then stay with me a while now,» he said, and lifted slowly to her his appealing face. She sat down, and screened herself with a little feminine transparency.

«I can't stay long: it's going to rain!»

He cast a wicked glance at the sky from under his hat; there were a few clouds on the horizon.

«And so you are never going to speak to me again?» he said mournfully.

«Never!» How delicious her laughter was.

«I'll put a ring on your finger to remember me by.»

He lay over in the grass and pulled several stalks. Then he lifted his eyes beseechingly to hers.

«Will you let me?»

Daphne hid her hands. He drew himself to her side and took one of them forcibly from her lap.

With a slow, caressing movement he began to braid the grass ring around her finger — in and out, around and around, his fingers laced with her fingers, his palm lying close upon her palm, his blood tingling through the skin upon her blood. He made the braiding go wrong, and took it off and began over again. Two or three times she drew a deep breath, and stole a bewildered look at his face, which was so close to hers that his hair brushed it — so close that she heard the quiver of his own breath. Then all at once he folded his hands about hers with a quick, fierce tenderness, and looked up at her. She turned her face aside and tried to draw her hand away. His clasp tightened. She snatched it away, and got up with a nervous laugh.

«Look at the butterflies! Aren't they pretty?»

He sprang up and tried to seize her hand again.

«You shan't go home yet!» he said, in an undertone.

«Shan't I?» she said, backing away from him. «Who's going to keep me?»

«*I am*,» he said, laughing excitedly and following her closely.

«My father's coming!» she cried out as a warning.

He turned and looked: there was no one in sight.

«He *is* coming — sooner or later!» she called.

She had retreated several yards off into the sunlight of the meadow.

The remembrance of the risk that he was causing her to run checked him. He went over to her.

«When can I see you again — soon?»

He had never spoken so seriously to her before. He had never before been so serious. But within the last hour Nature had been doing her work, and its effect was immediate. His sincerity instantly conquered her. Her eyes fell.

«No one has any right to keep us from seeing each other!» he insisted. «We must settle that for ourselves.»

Daphne made no reply.

«But we can't meet here any more—with people passing backward and forward!» he continued rapidly and decisively. «What has happened to-day mustn't happen again.»

«No!» she replied, in a voice barely to be heard. «It must never happen again. We can't meet here.»

They were walking side by side now toward the meadow-path. As they reached it he paused.

«Come to the back of the pasture—to-morrow!—at four o'clock!» he said, tentatively, recklessly.

Daphne did not answer as she moved away from him along the path homeward.

«Will you come?» he called out to her.

She turned and shook her head. Whatever her own new plans may have become, she was once more happy and laughing.

«Come, Daphne!»

She walked several paces further and turned and shook her head again.

«Come!» he pleaded.

She laughed at him.

He wheeled round to his mare grazing near. As he put his foot into the stirrup, he looked again: she was standing in the same place, laughing still.

«*You* go,» she cried, waving him good-by. «There'll not be a soul to disturb you! To-morrow—at four o'clock!»

«Will you be there?» he said.

«Will you?» she answered.

«I'll be there to-morrow,» he said, «and every other day till you come.»

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OLD KING SOLOMON'S CORONATION

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He stood on the topmost of the court-house steps, and for a moment looked down on the crowd with the usual air of official severity.

«Gentlemen,» he then cried out sharply, «by an ordah of the cou't I now offah this man at public sale to the highes' biddah.

He is able-bodied but lazy, without visible property or means of suppoht, an' of dissolute habits. He is therefoh adjudged guilty of high misdemeanahs, an' is to be sole into labah foh a twelvemonth. How much, then, am I offahed foh the vagrant? How much am I offahed foh ole King Sol'mon?»

Nothing was offered for old King Solomon. The spectators formed themselves into a ring around the big vagrant, and settled down to enjoy the performance.

«Staht 'im, somebody.»

Somebody started a laugh, which rippled around the circle.

The sheriff looked on with an expression of unrelaxed severity, but catching the eye of an acquaintance on the outskirts, he exchanged a lightning wink of secret appreciation. Then he lifted off his tight beaver hat, wiped out of his eyes a little shower of perspiration which rolled suddenly down from above, and warmed a degree to his theme.

«Come, gentlemen,» he said more suasively, «it's too hot to stan' heah all day. Make me an offah! You all know ole King Sol'mon; don't wait to be interduced. How much, then, to staht 'im? Say fifty dollahs! Twenty-five! Fifteen! Ten! Why, gentlemen! Not *ten* dollahs? Remembah, this is the Blue-Grass Region of Kentucky—the land of Boone an' Kenton, the home of Henry Clay!» he added, in an oratorical *crescendo.*

«He ain't wuth his victuals,» said an oily little tavern-keeper, folding his arms restfully over his own stomach and cocking up one piggish eye into his neighbor's face. «He ain't wuth his 'taters.»

«Buy 'im foh 'is rags!» cried a young law student, with a Blackstone under his arm, to the town rag picker opposite, who was unconsciously ogling the vagrant's apparel.

«I *might* buy 'im foh 'is *scalp,*» drawled a farmer, who had taken part in all kinds of scalp contests, and was now known to be busily engaged in collecting crow scalps for a match soon to come off between two rival counties.

«I think I'll buy 'im foh a hat sign,» said a manufacturer of ten-dollar Castor and Rhorum hats. This sally drew merry attention to the vagrant's hat, and the merchant felt rewarded.

«You'd bettah say the town ought to buy 'im an' put 'im up on top of the cou't-house as a scarecrow foh the cholera,» said some one else.

«What news of the cholera did the stage coach bring this mohning?» quickly inquired his neighbor in his ear; and the two immediately fell into low, grave talk, forgot the auction, and turned away.

"Stop, gentlemen, stop!" cried the sheriff, who had watched the rising tide of good humor, and now saw his chance to float in on it with spreading sails. "You're runnin' the price in the wrong direction — down, not up. The law requires that he be sole to the highes' biddah, not the lowes'. As loyal citizens, uphole the constitution of the commonwealth of Kentucky an' make me an offah; the man is really a great bargain. In the first place, he would cos' his ownah little or nothin', because, as you see, he keeps himself in cigahs an' clo'es; then, his main article of diet is whisky — a supply of which he always has on han'. He don't even need a bed, foh you know he sleeps jus' as well on any doohstep; noh a chair, foh he prefers to sit roun' on the curbstones. Remembah, too, gentlemen, that ole King Sol'mon is a Virginian — from the same neighbohhood as Mr. Clay. Remembah that he is well educated, that he is an *awful* Whig, an' that he has smoked mo' of the stumps of Mr. Clay's cigahs than any other man in existence. If you don't b'lieve *me*, gentlemen, yondah goes Mr. Clay now; call *him* ovah an' ask 'im foh yo'se'ves."

He paused, and pointed with his right forefinger towards Main Street, along which the spectators, with a sudden craning of necks, beheld the familiar figure of the passing statesman.

"But you don't need *any*body to tell these fac's, gentlemen," he continued. "You merely need to be reminded that ole King Sol'mon is no ohdinary man. Mo'ovah he has a kine heaht; he nevah spoke a rough wohd to anybody in this worl', an' he is as proud as Tecumseh of his good name an' charactah. An', gentlemen," he added, bridling with an air of mock gallantry and laying a hand on his heart, "if anythin' fu'thah is required in the way of a puffect encomium, we all know that there isn't anothah man among us who cuts as wide a swath among the ladies. The'foh, if you have any appreciation of virtue, any magnanimity of heaht; if you set a propah valuation upon the descendants of Virginia, that mothah of Presidents; if you believe in the pure laws of Kentucky as the pioneer bride of the Union; if you love America an' love the worl' — make me a gen'rous, high-toned offah foh ole King Sol'mon!"

He ended his peroration amid a shout of laughter and applause, and feeling satisfied that it was a good time for returning to a more practical treatment of his subject, proceeded in a sincere tone:—

«He can easily earn from one to two dollahs a day, an' from three to six hundred a yeah. There's not anothah white man in town capable of doin' as much work. There's not a niggah han' in the hemp factories with such muscles an' such a chest. *Look* at 'em! An', if you don't b'lieve me, step fo'ward and *feel* 'em. How much, then, is bid foh 'im?»

«One dollah!» said the owner of a hemp factory, who had walked forward and felt the vagrant's arm, laughing, but coloring up also as the eyes of all were quickly turned upon him. In those days it was not an unheard-of thing for the muscles of a human being to be thus examined when being sold into servitude to a new master.

«Thank you!» cried the sheriff, cheerily. «One precinc' heard from! One dollah! I am offahed one dollah foh ole King Sol'mon. One dollah foh the king! Make it a half. One dollah an' a half. Make it a half. One dol-dol-dol-dollah!»

Two medical students, returning from lectures at the old Medical Hall, now joined the group, and the sheriff explained:—

«One dollah is bid foh the vagrant ole King Sol'mon, who is to be sole into labah foh a twelvemonth. Is there any othah bid? Are you all done? One dollah, once—»

«Dollah and a half,» said one of the students, and remarked half jestingly under his breath to his companion, «I'll buy him on the chance of his dying. We'll dissect him.»

«Would you own his body if he *should* die?»

«If he dies while bound to me, I'll arrange *that*.»

«One dollah an' a half,» resumed the sheriff, and falling into the tone of a facile auctioneer he rattled on:—

«One dollah an' a half foh ole Sol'mon—sol, sol, sol,—do, re, mi, fa, sol,—do, re, mi, fa, sol! Why, gentlemen, you can set the king to music!»

All this time the vagrant had stood in the centre of that close ring of jeering and humorous bystanders—a baffling text from which to have preached a sermon on the infirmities of our imperfect humanity. Some years before, perhaps as a master-stroke of derision, there had been given to him that title which could but heighten the contrast of his personality and estate with every suggestion of the ancient sacred magnificence; and never had the mockery seemed so fine as at this moment, when he was led forth into the streets to receive the lowest sentence of the law upon his poverty and dissolute idleness. He was apparently in the very prime of life — a striking figure, for nature at least had truly done some royal work on him. Over six feet in height, erect, with limbs well shaped and sinewy, with chest and neck full of the lines of great power, a large head thickly covered with long, reddish hair, eyes blue, face beardless, complexion fair but discolored by low passions and excesses — such was old King Solomon. He wore a stiff, high, black Castor hat of the period, with the crown smashed in and the torn rim hanging down over one ear; a black cloth coat in the old style, ragged and buttonless; a white cotton shirt, with the broad collar crumpled wide open at the neck and down his sunburnt bosom; blue jean pantaloons, patched at the seat and the knees; and ragged cotton socks that fell down over the tops of his dusty shoes, which were open at the heels.

In one corner of his sensual mouth rested the stump of a cigar. Once during the proceedings he had produced another, lighted it, and continued quietly smoking. If he took to himself any shame as the central figure of this ignoble performance, no one knew it. There was something almost royal in his unconcern. The humor, the badinage, the open contempt, of which he was the public target, fell thick and fast upon him, but as harmlessly as would balls of pith upon a coat of mail. In truth, there was that in his great, lazy, gentle, good-humored bulk and bearing which made the gibes seem all but despicable. He shuffled from one foot to the other as though he found it a trial to stand up so long, but all the while looking the spectators full in the eyes without the least impatience. He suffered the man of the factory to walk round him and push and pinch his muscles as calmly as though he had been the show bull at a country fair. Once only, when the sheriff had pointed across the street at the figure of Mr. Clay, he had looked quickly in that direction with a kindling light in his eye and a passing flush on his face. For the rest, he seemed like a man who has drained his cup of human life and has nothing left him but to fill again and drink without the least surprise or eagerness.

The bidding between the man of the factory and the student had gone slowly on. The price had reached ten dollars. The heat was intense, the sheriff tired. Then something occurred to revivify the scene. Across the market place and toward the steps of the court-house there suddenly came trundling along in breathless haste a huge old negress, carrying on one arm a large shallow basket containing apple-crab lanterns and fresh gingerbread. With a series of half-articulate grunts and snorts she approached the edge of the crowd and tried to force her way through. She coaxed, she begged, she elbowed and pushed and scolded, now laughing, and now with the passion of tears in her thick, excited voice. All at once, catching sight of the sheriff, she lifted one ponderous brown arm, naked to the elbow, and waved her hand to him above the heads of those in front.

«Hole on marster! hole on!» she cried in a tone of humorous entreaty. «Don' knock 'im off till I come! Gim *me* a bid at 'im!»

The sheriff paused and smiled. The crowd made way tumultuously, with broad laughter and comment.

«Stan' aside theah an' let Aun' Charlotte in!»

«*Now* you'll see biddin'!»

«Get out of the way foh Aun' Charlotte!»

«Up, my free niggah! Hurrah foh Kentucky!»

A moment more and she stood inside the ring of spectators, her basket on the pavement at her feet, her hands plumped akimbo into her fathomless sides, her head up, and her soft, motherly eyes turned eagerly upon the sheriff. Of the crowd she seemed unconscious, and on the vagrant before her she had not cast a single glance.

She was dressed with perfect neatness. A red and yellow Madras 'kerchief was bound about her head in a high coil, and another over the bosom of her stiffly starched and smoothly ironed blue cottonade dress. Rivulets of perspiration ran down over her nose, her temples, and around her ears, and disappeared mysteriously in the creases of her brown neck. A single drop accidentally hung glistening like a diamond on the circlet of one of her large brass earrings.

The sheriff looked at her a moment, smiling but a little disconcerted. The spectacle was unprecedented.

«What do you want heah, Aun' Charlotte?» he asked kindly. «You can't sell yo' pies an' gingerbread heah.»

«I don' *wan'* sell no pies en gingerbread,» she replied, contemptuously. «I wan' bid on *him*,» and she nodded sidewise at the vagrant. «White folks allers sellin' niggahs to wuk fuh *dem;* I gwine to buy a white man to wuk fuh *me*. En he gwine t' git a mighty hard mistiss, you heah *me!*»

The eyes of the sheriff twinkled with delight.

«Ten dollahs is offahed foh ole King Sol'mon. Is theah any othah bid. Are you all done?»

«Leben,» she said.

Two young ragamuffins crawled among the legs of the crowd up to her basket and filched pies and cake beneath her very nose.

«Twelve!» cried the student, laughing.

«Thirteen!» she laughed, too, but her eyes flashed.

«*You are bidding against a niggah,*» whispered the student's companion in his ear.

«So I am; let's be off,» answered the other, with a hot flush on his proud face.

Thus the sale was ended, and the crowd variously dispersed. In a distant corner of the courtyard the ragged urchins were devouring their unexpected booty. The old negress drew a red handkerchief out of her bosom, untied a knot in a corner of it, and counted out the money to the sheriff. Only she and the vagrant were now left on the spot.

«You have bought me. What do you want me to do?» he asked quietly.

«Lohd, honey!» she answered, in a low tone of affectionate chiding, «I don' wan' you to do *nothin'!* I wuzn' gwine t' 'low dem white folks to buy you. Dey'd wuk you till you dropped dead. You go 'long en do ez you please.»

She gave a cunning chuckle of triumph in thus setting at naught the ends of justice, and in a voice rich and musical with affection, she said, as she gave him a little push:—

«You bettah be gittin' out o' dis blazin' sun. G' on home! I be 'long by-en-by.»

He turned and moved slowly away in the direction of Water Street, where she lived; and she, taking up her basket, shuffled across the market place toward Cheapside, muttering to herself the while:—

«I come mighty nigh gittin' dar too late, foolin' 'long wid dese pies. Sellin' *him* 'ca'se he don' wuk! Umph! if all de men in dis town dat don' wuk wuz to be tuk up en sole, d' wouldn' be 'nough money in de town to buy em! Don' I see 'em settin' 'roun' dese taverns f'om mohnin' till night?»

. . . .

Nature soon smiles upon her own ravages and strews our graves with flowers, not as memories, but for other flowers when the spring returns.

It was one cool, brilliant morning late in that autumn. The air blew fresh and invigorating, as though on the earth there were no corruption, no death. Far southward had flown the plague. A spectator in the open court square might have seen many signs of life returning to the town. Students hurried along, talking eagerly. Merchants met for the first time and spoke of the winter trade. An old negress, gayly and neatly dressed, came into the market place, and sitting down on a sidewalk displayed her yellow and red apples and fragrant gingerbread. She hummed to herself an old cradle-song, and in her soft, motherly black eyes shone a mild, happy radiance. A group of young ragamuffins eyed her longingly from a distance. Court was to open for the first time since the spring. The hour was early, and one by one the lawyers passed slowly in. On the steps of the court-house three men were standing: Thomas Brown, the sheriff; old Peter Leuba, who had just walked over from his music store on Main Street; and little M. Giron, the French confectioner. Each wore mourning on his hat, and their voices were low and grave.

« Gentlemen, » the sheriff was saying, « it was on this very spot the day befoah the cholera broke out that I sole 'im as a vagrant. An' I did the meanes' thing a man can evah do. I hel' 'im up to public ridicule foh his weakness an' made spoht of 'is infirmities. I laughed at 'is povahty an' 'is ole clo'es. I delivahed on 'im as complete an oration of sarcastic detraction as I could prepare on the spot, out of my own meanness an' with the vulgah sympathies of the crowd. Gentlemen, if I only had that crowd heah now, an' ole King Sol'mon standin' in the midst of it, that I might ask 'im to accept a humble public apology, offahed from the heaht of one who feels himself unworthy to shake 'is han'! But gentlemen, that crowd will nevah reassemble. Neahly ev'ry man of them is dead, an' ole King Sol'mon buried them. »

« He buried my friend Adolphe Xaupi, » said François Giron, touching his eyes with his handkerchief.

« There is a case of my best Jamaica rum for him whenever he comes for it, » said old Leuba, clearing his throat.

« But, gentlemen, while we are speakin' of ole King Sol'mon we ought not to forget who it is that has suppohted 'im. Yondah she sits on the sidewalk, sellin' 'er apples an' gingerbread."

The three men looked in the direction indicated.

"Heah comes ole King Sol'mon now," exclaimed the sheriff.

Across the open square the vagrant was seen walking slowly along with his habitual air of quiet, unobtrusive preoccupation. A minute more and he had come over and passed into the courthouse by a side door.

"Is Mr. Clay to be in court to-day?"

"He is expected, I think."

"Then let's go in: there will be a crowd."

"I don't know: so many are dead."

They turned and entered and found seats as quietly as possible; for a strange and sorrowful hush brooded over the court-room. Until the bar assembled, it had not been realized how many were gone. The silence was that of a common overwhelming disaster. No one spoke with his neighbor; no one observed the vagrant as he entered and made his way to a seat on one of the meanest benches, a little apart from the others. He had not sat there since the day of his indictment for vagrancy. The judge took his seat, and making a great effort to control himself, passed his eyes slowly over the court-room. All at once he caught sight of old King Solomon sitting against the wall in an obscure corner; and before any one could know what he was doing, he had hurried down and walked up to the vagrant and grasped his hand. He tried to speak, but could not. Old King Solomon had buried his wife and daughter,—buried them one clouded midnight, with no one present but himself.

Then the oldest member of the bar started up and followed the example; and then the other members, rising by a common impulse, filed slowly back and one by one wrung that hard and powerful hand. After them came the other persons in the court-room. The vagrant, the gravedigger, had risen and stood against the wall, at first with a white face and a dazed expression, not knowing what it meant; afterwards, when he understood it, his head dropped suddenly forward and his tears fell thick and hot upon the hands that he could not see. And his were not the only tears. Not a man in the long file but paid his tribute of emotion as he stepped forward to honor that image of sadly eclipsed but still effulgent humanity. It was not grief, it was not gratitude, nor any sense of making reparation for the past. It was the softening influence of an act of heroism, which makes every man feel himself a brother hand in hand with every other;—such power has a single act of moral greatness to reverse the relations of men, lifting up one, and bringing all others to do him homage.

It was the coronation scene in the life of 'Ole' King Solomon of Kentucky.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

(1828–1889)

EACH form of verse has, in addition to its laws of structure, a subtle quality as difficult to define as the perfume of a flower. The poem, 'An Evening,' given below, may be classified both as a song and as a lyric; yet it needs no music other than its own rhythms, and the full close to each verse which falls upon the ear like a soft and final chord ending a musical composition. A light touch and a feeling for shades of meaning are required to execute such dainty verse. In 'St. Margaret's Eve,' and in many other ballads, Allingham expresses the broader, more dramatic sweep of the ballad, and reveals his Celtic ancestry.

The lovable Irishman, William Allingham, worked hard to enter the brotherhood of poets. When he was only fourteen his father took him from school to become clerk in the town bank of which he himself was manager. «The books which he had to keep for the next seven years were not those on which his heart was set,» says Mr. George Birkbeck Hill. But this fortune is almost an inevitable part, and probably not the worst part, of the training for a literary vocation; and he justified his ambitions by pluckily studying alone till he had mastered Greek, Latin, French, and German.

Mr. Hill, in his 'Letters of D. G. Rossetti' (Atlantic Monthly, May, 1896), thus quotes Allingham's own delightful description of his early home at Ballyshannon, County Donegal:—

«The little old town where I was born has a voice of its own, low, solemn, persistent, humming through the air day and night, summer and winter. Whenever I think of that town I seem to hear the voice. The river which makes it rolls over rocky ledges into the tide. Before spreads a great ocean in sunshine or storm; behind stretches a many-islanded lake. On the south runs a wavy line of blue mountains; and on the north, over green rocky hills rise peaks of a more distant range. The trees hide in glens or cluster near the river; gray rocks and bowlders lie scattered about the windy pastures. The sky arches wide over all, giving room to multitudes of stars by night, and long processions of clouds blown from the sea; but also, in the childish memory where these pictures live, to deeps of celestial blue in the endless days of summer. An odd, out-of-the-way little town, ours, on the extreme western edge of Europe; our next neighbors, sunset way, being citizens of the great new republic, which indeed, to our imagination, seemed little if at all farther off than England in the opposite direction.»

Of the cottage in which he spent most of his childhood and youth he writes:—

«Opposite the hall door a good-sized walnut-tree leaned its wrinkled stem towards the house, and brushed some of the second-story panes with its broad, fragrant leaves. To sit at that little upper window when it was open to a summer twilight, and the great tree rustled gently, and sent one leafy spray so far that it even touched my face, was an enchantment beyond all telling. Killarney, Switzerland, Venice, could not, in later life, come near it. On three sides the cottage looked on flowers and branches, which I count as one of the fortunate chances of my childhood; the sense of natural beauty thus receiving its due share of nourishment, and of a kind suitable to those early years.»

At last a position in the Customs presented itself:—

«In the spring of 1846 I gladly took leave forever of discount ledgers and current accounts, and went to Belfast for two months' instruction in the duties of Principal Coast Officer of Customs; a tolerably well-sounding title, but which carried with it a salary of but £80 a year. I trudged daily about the docks and timber-yards, learning to measure logs, piles of planks, and, more troublesome, ships for tonnage; indoors, part of the time practiced customs book-keeping, and talked to the clerks about literature and poetry in a way that excited some astonishment, but on the whole, as I found at parting, a certain degree of curiosity and respect. I preached Tennyson to them. My spare time was mostly spent in reading and haunting booksellers' shops where, I venture to say, I laid out a good deal more than most people, in proportion to my income, and managed to get glimpses of many books which I could not afford or did not care to buy. I enjoyed my new position, on the whole, without analysis, as a great improvement on the bank; and for the rest, my inner mind was brimful of love and poetry, and usually all external things appeared trivial save in their relation to it.»

Of Allingham's early song-writing, his friend Arthur Hughes says:—

«Rossetti, and I think Allingham himself, told me, in the early days of our acquaintance, how in remote Ballyshannon, where he was a clerk in the Customs, in evening walks he would hear the Irish girls at their cottage doors singing old ballads, which he would pick up. If they were broken or incomplete, he would add to them or finish them; if they were improper he would refine them. He could not get them sung till he got the Dublin Catnach of that day to print them, on long strips of blue paper, like old songs, and if about the sea, with the old rough woodcut of a ship on the top. He either gave them away or they were sold in the neighborhood. Then, in his evening walks, he had at last the pleasure of hearing some of his own ballads sung at the cottage doors by the blooming lasses, who were quite unaware that it was the author who was passing by.»

In 1850 Allingham published a small volume of lyrics whose freshness and delicacy seemed to announce a new singer, and four years later his ‹Day and Night Songs› strengthened this impression. Stationed as revenue officer in various parts of England, he wrote much verse, and published also the ‹The Rambles of Patricius Walker,› a collection of essays upon his walks through England; ‹Lawrence Bloomfield in Ireland,› the tale of a young landlord's efforts to improve the condition of his tenantry; an anthology, ‹Nightingale Valley› (1862), and an excellent collection of English ballads, ‹The Ballad Book› (1865).

In 1870 he gladly embraced an opportunity to leave the Customs for the position of assistant editor of Fraser's Magazine under Froude, whom he afterward succeeded as editor. He was now a member of a brilliant literary circle, knew Tennyson, Ruskin, and Carlyle, and was admitted into the warm friendship of the Pre-Raphaelites. But in no way does he reflect the Pre-Raphaelite spirit by which he was surrounded; nor does he write his lyrics in the metres and rhythms of mediæval France. He is as oblivious of rondeaux, ballades, and roundels, as he is of fair damosels with cygnet necks and full pomegranate lips. He is a child of nature, whose verse is free from all artificial inspiration or expression, and seems to flow easily, clearly, and tenderly from his pen. Some of it errs in being too fanciful. In the Flower-Songs, indeed, he sometimes becomes trivial in his comparison of each English poet to a special flower; but his poetry is usually sincere with an undercurrent of pathos, as in ‹The Ruined Chapel,› ‹The Winter Pear,› and the ‹Song.› For lightness of touch and aerial grace, ‹The Bubble› will bear comparison with any verse of its own *genre.* ‹Robin Redbreast› has many delightful lines; and in ‹The Fairies› one is taken into the realm of Celtic folklore, which is Allingham's inheritance, where the Brownies, the Pixies, and the Leprechauns trip over the dew-spangled meadows, or dance on the yellow sands, and then vanish away in fantastic mists. Quite different is ‹Lovely Mary Donnelly,› which is a sample of the popular songs that made him a favorite in his own country.

After his death at Hampstead in 1889, his body was cremated according to his wish, when these lines of his own were read:—

«Body to purifying flame,
Soul to the Great Deep whence it came,
Leaving a song on earth below,
An urn of ashes white as snow.»

THE RUINED CHAPEL

BY THE shore, a plot of ground
Clips a ruined chapel round,
Buttressed with a grassy mound;
Where Day and Night and Day go by
And bring no touch of human sound.

Washing of the lonely seas,
Shaking of the guardian trees,
Piping of the salted breeze;
Day and Night and Day go by
To the endless tune of these.

Or when, as winds and waters keep
A hush more dead than any sleep,
Still morns to stiller evenings creep,
And Day and Night and Day go by;
Here the silence is most deep.

The empty ruins, lapsed again
Into Nature's wide domain,
Sow themselves with seed and grain
As Day and Night and Day go by;
And hoard June's sun and April's rain.

Here fresh funeral tears were shed;
Now the graves are also dead;
And suckers from the ash-tree spread,
While Day and Night and Day go by;
And stars move calmly overhead.

From 'Day and Night Songs.'

THE WINTER PEAR

IS ALWAYS Age severe?
Is never Youth austere?
Spring-fruits are sour to eat;
Autumn's the mellow time.
Nay, very late in the year,
Short day and frosty rime,
Thought, like a winter pear,
Stone-cold in summer's prime,
May turn from harsh to sweet.

From 'Ballads and Songs.'

SONG

O SPIRIT of the Summer-time!
Bring back the roses to the dells;
The swallow from her distant clime,
The honey-bee from drowsy cells.

Bring back the friendship of the sun;
The gilded evenings calm and late,
When weary children homeward run,
And peeping stars bid lovers wait.

Bring back the singing; and the scent
Of meadow-lands at dewy prime;
Oh, bring again my heart's content,
Thou Spirit of the Summer-time!

From ‹Day and Night Songs.›

THE BUBBLE

SEE the pretty planet!
Floating sphere!
Faintest breeze will fan it
Far or near;

World as light as feather;
Moonshine rays,
Rainbow tints together,
As it plays.

Drooping, sinking, failing,
Nigh to earth,
Mounting, whirling, sailing,
Full of mirth;

Life there, welling, flowing,
Waving round;
Pictures coming, going,
Without sound.

Quick now, be this airy
Globe repelled!
Never can the fairy
Star be held.

Touched—it in a twinkle
Disappears!
Leaving but a sprinkle,
As of tears.

From ‹Ballads and Songs.›

ST. MARGARET'S EVE

I BUILT my castle upon the seaside,
The waves roll so gayly O,
Half on the land and half in the tide,
Love me true!

Within was silk, without was stone,
The waves roll so gayly O,
It lacks a queen, and that alone,
Love me true!

The gray old harper sang to me,
The waves roll so gayly O,
«Beware of the Damsel of the Sea!»
Love me true!

Saint Margaret's Eve it did befall,
The waves roll so gayly O,
The tide came creeping up the wall,
Love me true!

I opened my gate; who there should stand—
The waves roll so gayly O,
But a fair lady, with a cup in her hand,
Love me true!

The cup was gold, and full of wine,
The waves roll so gayly O,
«Drink,» said the lady, «and I will be thine,»
Love me true!

«Enter my castle, lady fair,»
The waves roll so gayly O,
«You shall be queen of all that's there,»
Love me true!

A gray old harper sang to me,
The waves roll so gayly O,
«Beware of the Damsel of the Sea!»
Love me true!

In hall he harpeth many a year,
The waves roll so gayly O,
And we will sit his song to hear,
Love me true!

«I love thee deep, I love thee true,»
The waves roll so gayly O,
«But ah! I know not how to woo,»
Love me true!

Down dashed the cup, with a sudden shock,
The waves roll so gayly O,
The wine like blood ran over the rock,
Love me true!

She said no word, but shrieked aloud,
The waves roll so gayly O,
And vanished away from where she stood,
Love me true!

I locked and barred my castle door,
The waves roll so gayly O,
Three summer days I grieved sore,
Love me true!

For myself a day, a night,
The waves roll so gayly O,
And two to moan that lady bright,
Love me true!

From ‹Ballads and Songs.›

THE FAIRIES

(A CHILD'S SONG)

UP THE airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a hunting
For fear of little men:
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather.

Down along the rocky shore
Some have made their home;
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow-tide foam.
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain-lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

High on the hill-top
  The old King sits;
He is now so old and gray
  He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
  Columbkill he crosses,
On his stately journeys
  From Sliveleague to Rosses;
Or going up with music
  On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
  Of the gay northern lights.

They stole little Bridget
  For seven years long;
When she came down again
  Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back,
  Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
  But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
  Deep within the lakes,
On a bed of flag leaves
  Watching till she wakes.

By the craggy hillside,
  Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
  For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
  As dig them up in spite,
He shall feel their sharpest thorns
  In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
  Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a hunting
  For fear of little men:
Wee folk, good folk,
  Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
  And white owl's feather.

From ‹Ballads and Songs.›

ROBIN REDBREAST

(A CHILD'S SONG)

GOOD-BY, good-by, to Summer!
For Summer's nearly done;
The garden smiling faintly,
Cool breezes in the sun;
Our Thrushes now are silent,
Our Swallows flown away—
But Robin's here, in coat of brown,
With ruddy breast-knot gay.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
Oh, Robin, dear!
Robin singing sweetly
In the falling of the year.

Bright yellow, red, and orange,
The leaves come down in hosts;
The trees are Indian Princes,
But soon they'll turn to Ghosts;
The scanty pears and apples
Hang russet on the bough,
It's Autumn, Autumn, Autumn late,
'Twill soon be winter now.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
Oh, Robin, dear!
And welaway! my Robin,
For pinching times are near.

The fireside for the Cricket,
The wheatstack for the Mouse,
When trembling night-winds whistle
And moan all round the house.
The frosty ways like iron,
The branches plumed with snow—
Alas! in Winter, dead and dark,
Where can poor Robin go?
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
Oh, Robin, dear!
And a crumb of bread for Robin,
His little heart to cheer.

From 'Ballads and Songs.'

AN EVENING

A sunset's mounded cloud;
A diamond evening-star;
Sad blue hills afar:
Love in his shroud.

Scarcely a tear to shed;
Hardly a word to say;
The end of a summer's day;
Sweet Love is dead.

From ‹Day and Night Songs.›

DAFFODIL

Gold tassel upon March's bugle-horn,
Whose blithe reveille blows from hill to hill
And every valley rings — O Daffodil!
What promise for the season newly born?
Shall wave on wave of flow'rs, full tide of corn,
O'erflow the world, then fruited Autumn fill
Hedgerow and garth? Shall tempest, blight, or chill
Turn all felicity to scathe and scorn?

Tantarrara! the joyous Book of Spring
Lies open, writ in blossoms; not a bird
Of evil augury is seen or heard:
Come now, like Pan's old crew, we'll dance and sing,
Or Oberon's: for hill and valley ring
To March's bugle-horn,—Earth's blood is stirred.

From ‹Flower Pieces.›

LOVELY MARY DONNELLY

(To an Irish Tune)

O lovely Mary Donnelly, it's you I love the best!
If fifty girls were round you, I'd hardly see the rest.
Be what it may the time of day, the place be where it will,
Sweet looks of Mary Donnelly, they bloom before me still.

Her eyes like mountain water that's flowing on a rock,
How clear they are, how dark they are! and they give me many a shock.
Red rowans warm in sunshine and wetted with a shower,
Could ne'er express the charming lip that has me in its power.

Her nose is straight and handsome, her eyebrows lifted up;
Her chin is very neat and pert, and smooth like a china cup;
Her hair's the brag of Ireland, so weighty and so fine,
It's rolling down upon her neck and gathered in a twine.

The dance o' last Whit Monday night exceeded all before;
No pretty girl for miles about was missing from the floor;
But Mary kept the belt of love, and oh, but she was gay!
She danced a jig, she sung a song, that took my heart away.

When she stood up for dancing, her steps were so complete,
The music nearly killed itself to listen to her feet;
The fiddler moaned his blindness, he heard her so much praised,
But blessed himself he wasn't deaf, when once her voice she raised.

And evermore I'm whistling or lilting what you sung,
Your smile is always in my heart, your name beside my tongue;
But you've as many sweethearts as you'd count on both your hands,
And for myself there's not a thumb or little finger stands.

Oh, you're the flower o' womankind in country or in town;
The higher I exalt you, the lower I'm cast down.
If some great lord should come this way, and see your beauty bright,
And you to be his lady, I'd own it was but right.

Oh, might we live together in a lofty palace hall,
Where joyful music rises, and where scarlet curtains fall!
Oh, might we live together in a cottage mean and small,
With sods of grass the only roof, and mud the only wall!

O lovely Mary Donnelly, your beauty's my distress:
It's far too beauteous to be mine, but I'll never wish it less.
The proudest place would fit your face, and I am poor and low;
But blessings be about you, dear, wherever you may go!

From ‹Ballads and Songs.›

KARL JONAS LUDVIG ALMQUIST

(1793–1866)

ALMQUIST, one of the most versatile writers of Sweden, was a man of strange contrasts, a genius as uncertain as a will-o'-the-wisp. His contemporary, the famous poet and critic Atterbom, writes:—

> «What did the great poets of past times possess which upheld them under even the bitterest worldly circumstances? Two things: one a strong and conscientious will, the other a single—not double, much less manifold—determination for their work, oneness. They were not self-seekers; they sought, they worshiped something better than themselves. The aim which stood dimly before their inmost souls was not the enjoyment of flattered vanity; it was a high, heroic symbol of love of honor and love of country, of heavenly wisdom. For this they thought it worth while to fight, for this they even thought it worth while to suffer, without finding the suffering in itself strange, or calling earth to witness thereof. . . . The writer of ‘Törnrosens Bok’ [The Book of the Rose] is one of these few; he does therefore already reign over a number of youthful hearts, and out of them will rise his time of honor, a time when many of the celebrities of the present moment will have faded away.»

Almquist was born in Stockholm in 1793. When still a very young man he obtained a good official position, but gave it up in 1823 to lead a colony of friends into the forests of Värmland, where they intended to return to a primitive life close to the heart of nature. He called this colony a «Man's-home Association,» and ordained that in the primeval forest the members should live in turf-covered huts, wear homespun, eat porridge with a wooden spoon, and enact the ancient freeholder. The experiment was not successful, he tired of the manual work, and returning to Stockholm, became master of the new Elementary School, and began to write text-books and educational works. His publication of a number of epics, dramas, lyrics, and romances made him suddenly famous. Viewed as a whole, this collection is generally called ‘The Book of the Rose,’ but at times ‘En Irrande Hind’ (A Stray Deer). Of this, the two dramas, ‘Signora Luna’ and ‘Ramido Marinesco,’ contain some of the pearls of Swedish literature. Uneven in the plan and execution, they are yet masterly in dialogue, and their dramatic and tragic force is great. Almquist's imagination showed itself as individual as it is fantastic. Coming from a man hitherto known as the writer of text-books and the advocate of popular social ideas, the volumes aroused extraordinary interest. The author revealed himself as akin to Novalis and Victor Hugo, with a power of language like that of Atterbom, and a richness of color resembling Tegnèr's. Atterbom himself wrote of ‹Törnrosens Bok› that it was a work whose «faults were exceedingly easy to overlook and whose beauties exceedingly difficult to match.»

After this appeared in rapid succession, and written with equal ease, lyrical, dramatic, educational, poetical, æsthetical, philosophical, moral, and religious treatises, as well as lectures and studies in history and law; for Almquist now gave all his time to literary labors. His novels showed socialistic sympathies, and he put forth newspaper articles and pamphlets on Socialism which aroused considerable opposition. Moreover, he delighted in contradictions. One day he wrote as an avowed Christian, extolling virtue, piety, and Christian knowledge; the next, he abrogated religion as entirely unnecessary: and his own explanation of this variability was merely—«I paint so because it pleases me to paint so, and life is not otherwise.»

In 1851 was heard the startling rumor that he was accused of forgery and charged with murder. He fled from Sweden and disappeared from the knowledge of men. Going to America, he earned under a fictitious name a scanty living, and became, it is said, the private secretary of Abraham Lincoln. In 1866 he found himself again under the ban of the law, his papers were destroyed, and he escaped with difficulty to Bremen, where he died.

One of his latest works was his excellent modern novel, ‹Det Går An› (It's All Right), a forerunner of the «problem novel» of the day. It is an attack upon conventional marriage, and pictures the helplessness of a woman in the hands of a depraved man. Its extreme views called out violent criticism.

He was a romanticist through and through, with a strong leaning toward the French school. Among the best of his tales are ‹Araminta May,› ‹Skällnora Quarn› (Skällnora's Mill), and ‹Grimstahamns Nybygge› (Grimstahamn's Settlement). His idyl ‹Kapellet› (The Chapel) is wonderfully true to nature, and his novel ‹Palatset› (The Palace) is rich in humor and true poesy. His literary fame will probably rest on his romances, which are the best of their kind in Swedish literature.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CATTLE

Any one with a taste for physiognomy should carefully observe the features of the ox and the cow; their demeanor and the expression of their eyes. They are figures which bear an extraordinary stamp of respectability. They look neither joyful nor melancholy. They are seldom evilly disposed, but never sportive. They are full of gravity, and always seem to be going about their business. They are not merely of great economic service, but their whole persons carry the look of it. They are the very models of earthly carefulness.

Nothing is ever to be seen more dignified, more official-looking, than the whole behavior of the ox; his way of carrying his head, and looking around him. If anybody thinks I mean these words for a sarcasm, he is mistaken: no slur on official life, or on what the world calls a man's vocation, is intended. I hold them all in as much respect as could be asked. And though I have an eye for contours, no feeling of ridicule is connected in my mind with any of these. On the contrary, I regard the ox and the cow with the warmest feelings of esteem. I admire in them a naïve and striking picture of one who minds his own business; who submits to the claims of duty, not using the word in its highest sense; who in the world's estimate is dignified, steady, conventional, and middle-aged,—that is to say, neither youthful nor stricken in years.

Look at that ox which stands before you, chewing his cud and gazing around him with such unspeakable thoughtfulness—but which you will find, when you look more closely into his eyes, is thinking about nothing at all. Look at that discreet, excellent Dutch cow, which, gifted with an inexhaustible udder, stands quietly and allows herself to be milked as a matter of course, while she gazes into space with a most sensible expression. Whatever she does, she does with the same imperturbable calmness, and as when a person leaves an important trust to his own time and to posterity. If the worth of this creature is thus great on the one side, yet on the other it must be confessed that she possesses not a single trait of grace, not a particle of vivacity, and none of that quick characteristic retreating from an object which indicates an internal buoyancy, an elastic temperament, such as we see in a bird or fish. . . . There is something very agreeable in the varied lowing of cattle when heard in the distant country, and when replied to by a large herd, especially toward evening and amid echoes. On the other hand, nothing is more unpleasant than to hear all at once, and just beside one, the bellowing of a bull, who thus authoritatively announces himself, as if nobody else had any right to utter a syllable in his presence.

A NEW UNDINE

From ‹The Book of the Rose›

Miss Rudensköld and her companion sat in one of the pews in the cheerful and beautiful church of Normalm, which is all that is left of the once famous cloister of St. Clara, and still bears the saint's name. The sermon was finished, and the strong full tones of the organ, called out by the skillful hands of an excellent organist, hovered like the voices of unseen angel choirs in the high vaults of the church, floated down to the listeners, and sank deep into their hearts.

Azouras did not speak a single word; neither did she sing, for she did not know a whole hymn through. Nor did Miss Rudensköld sing, because it was not her custom to sing in church. During the organ solo, however, Miss Rudensköld ventured to make some remarks about Dr. Asplund's sermon which was so beautiful, and about the notices afterward which were so tiresome. But when her neighbor did not answer, but sat looking ahead with large, almost motionless eyes, as people stare without looking at anything in particular, she changed her subject.

At one of the organ tones which finished a cadence, Azouras started, and blinked quickly with her eyelids, and a light sigh showed that she came back to herself and her friend, from her vague contemplative state of mind. Something indescribable, very sad, shone in her eyes, and made them almost black; and with a childlike look at Miss Rudensköld she asked, «Tell me what that large painting over there represents.»

«The altar-piece? Don't you know? The altar-piece in Clara is one of the most beautiful we possess.»

«What is going on there?» asked Azouras.

Miss Rudensköld gave her a side glance; she did not know that her neighbor in the pew was a girl without baptism, without Christianity, without the slightest knowledge of holy religion, a heathen — and knew less than a heathen, for such a one has his teachings, although they are not Christian. Miss Rudensköld thought the girl's question came of a momentary forgetfulness, and answered, to remind her: —

« Well, you see, it is one of the usual subjects, but unusually well painted, that is all. High up among the other figures in the painting you will see the half-reclining figure of one that is dead — see what an expression the painter has put into the face! — That is the Saviour. »

« The Saviour? »

« Yes, God's son, you know; or God Himself. »

« And he is dead? » repeated Azouras to herself with wondering eyes. « Yes, I believe that; it must be so: it is godlike to die! »

Miss Rudensköld looked at her neighbor with wide-opened eyes. « You must not misunderstand this subject, » she said. « It is human to live and want to live; you can see that, too, in the altar-piece, for all the persons who are human beings, like ourselves, are alive. »

« Let us go out! I feel oppressed by fear — no, I will tarry here until my fear passes away. Go, dearest, I will send you word. »

Miss Rudensköld took leave of her; went out of the church and over the churchyard to the Eastern Gate, which faces Oden's lane. . . .

The girl meanwhile stayed inside; came to a corner in the organ stairs; saw people go out little by little; remained unobserved, and finally heard the sexton and the church-keeper go away. When the last door was closed, Azouras stepped out of her hiding-place. Shut out from the entire world, severed from all human beings, she found herself the only occupant of the large, light building, into which the sun lavishly poured his gold.

Although she was entirely ignorant of our holy church customs and the meaning of the things she saw around her, she had nevertheless, sometimes in the past, when her mother was in better health, been present at the church service as a pastime, and so remembered one thing and another. The persons with whom she lived, in the halls and corridors of the opera, hardly ever went to God's house; and generally speaking, church-going was not practiced much during this time. No wonder, then, that a child who was not a member of any religious body, and who had never received an enlightening word from any minister, should neglect what the initiated themselves did not attend to assiduously.

She walked up the aisle, and never had the sad, strange feeling of utter loneliness taken hold of her as it did now; it was coupled with the apprehension of a great, overhanging danger. Her heart beat wildly; she longed unspeakably — but for what? for her wild free forest out there, where she ran around quick as a deer? or for what?

She walked up toward the choir and approached the altar railing. « Here at least — I remember that once — but that was long ago, and it stands like a shadow before my memory — I saw many people kneel here: it must have been of some use to them? Suppose I did likewise? »

Nevertheless she thought it would be improper for her to kneel down on the decorated cushions around the chancel. She folded her hands and knelt outside of the choir on the bare stone floor. But what more was she to do or say now? Of what use was it all? Where was she to turn?

She knew nothing. She looked down into her own thoughts as into an immense, silent dwelling. Feelings of sorrow and a sense of transiency moved in slow swells, like shining, breaking waves, through her consciousness. « Oh — something to lean on — a help — where? where? where? »

She looked quietly about her; she saw nobody. She was sure to meet the most awful danger when the door was opened, if help did not come first.

She turned her eyes back toward the organ, and in her thoughts she besought grace of the straight, long, shining pipes. But all their mouths were silent now.

She looked up to the pulpit; nobody was standing there. In the pews nobody. She had sent everybody away from here and from herself.

She turned her head again toward the choir. She remembered that when she had seen so many gathered here, two ministers in vestments had moved about inside of the railing and had offered the kneeling worshipers something. No doubt to help them! But now — there was nobody inside there. To be sure she was kneeling here with folded hands and praying eyes; but there was nobody, nobody, nobody who offered her the least little thing. She wept.

She looked out of the great church windows to the clear noonday sky; her eyes beheld the delicate azure light which spread itself over everything far, far away, but on nothing could her eyes rest. There were no stars to be seen now, and the sun itself was hidden by the window post, although its mild golden light flooded the world.

She looked away again, and her eyes sank to the ground. Her knees were resting on a tombstone, and she saw many of the same kind about her. She read the names engraven on the stones; they were all Swedish, correct and well-known. «Oh,» she said to herself with a sigh, «I have not a name like others! My names have been many, borrowed, — and oh, often changed. I did not get one to be my very own! If only I had one like other people! Nobody has written me down in a book as I have heard it said others are written down. Nobody asks about me. I have nothing to do with anybody! Poor Azouras,» she whispered low to herself. She wept much.

There was no one else who said «poor Azouras Tintomara!» but it was as if an inner, higher, invisible being felt sorry for the outer, bodily, visible being, both one and the same person in her. She wept bitterly over herself.

«God is dead,» she thought, and looked up at the large altarpiece again. «But I am a human being; I must live.» And she wept more heartily, more bitterly. . . .

The afternoon passed, and the hour for vespers struck. The bells in the tower began to lift their solemn voices, and keys rattled in the lock. Then the heathen girl sprang up, and, much like a thin vanishing mist, disappeared from the altar. She hid in her corner again. It seemed to her that she had been forward, and had taken liberties in the choir of the church to which she had no right; and that in the congregation coming in now, she saw persons who had a right to everything.

Nevertheless, when the harmonious tones of the organ began to mix with the fragrant summer air in the church, Azouras stood radiant, and she felt quickly how the weight lifted from her breast. Was it because of the tears she had shed? Or did an unknown helper at this moment scatter the fear in her heart?

She felt no more that it would be dangerous to leave the church; she stole away, before vespers were over, came out into the churchyard and turned off to the northern gate.

GOD'S WAR

His mighty weapon drawing,
God smites the world he loves;
Thus, worthy of him growing,
She his reflection proves.
God's war like lightning striking,
The heart's deep core lays bare,
Which fair grows to his liking
Who is supremely fair.

Escapes no weakness shame,
No hid, ignoble feeling;
But when his thunder pealing
Enkindles life's deep flame,
And water clear upwelleth,
Flowing unto its goal,
God's grand cross standing, telleth
His truth unto the soul.
Sing, God's war, earth that shakes!
Sing, sing the peace he makes!

JOHANNA AMBROSIUS

(1854–)

Before the year 1895 the name of the German peasant, Johanna Ambrosius, was hardly known, even within her own country. Now her melodious verse has made her one of the most popular writers in Germany. Her genius found its way from the humble farm in Eastern Prussia, where she worked in the field beside her husband, to the very heart of the great literary circles. She was born in Lengwethen, a parish village in Eastern Prussia, on the 3d of August, 1854. She received only the commonest education, and every day was filled with the coarsest toil. But her mind and soul were uplifted by the gift of poetry, to which she gave voice in her rare moments of leisure. A delicate, middle-aged woman, whose simplicity is undisturbed by the lavish praises of literary men, she leads the most unpretending of lives. Her work became known by the merest chance. She sent a poem to a German weekly, where it attracted the attention of a Viennese gentleman, Dr. Schrattenthal, who collected her verses and sent the little volume into the world with a preface by himself. This work has already gone through twenty-six editions.

The short sketch cited, written some years ago, is the only prose of hers that has been published.

The distinguishing characteristics of the poetry of this singularly gifted woman are the deep, almost painfully intense earnestness pervading its every line, the fine sense of harmony and rhythmic felicity attending the comparatively few attempts she has thus far made, and her tender touch when dwelling upon themes of the heart and home. One cannot predict what her success will be when she attempts more ambitious flights, but thus far she seems to have probed the æsthetic heart of Germany to its centre.

A PEASANT'S THOUGHTS

The first snow, in large and thick flakes, fell gently and silently on the barren branches of the ancient pear-tree, standing like a sentinel at my house door. The first snow of the year speaks both of joy and sadness. It is so comfortable to sit in a warm room and watch the falling flakes, eternally pure and lovely. There are neither flowers nor birds about, to make you see and hear the beautiful great world. Now the busy peasant has time to read the stories in his calendar. And I, too, stopped my spinning-wheel, the holy Christ-child's gift on my thirteenth birthday, to fold my hands and to look through the calendar of my thoughts.

I did not hear a knock at the door, but a little man came in with a cordial «Good morning, little sister!» I knew him well enough, though we were not acquaintances. Half familiar, half strange, this little time-worn figure looked. His queer face seemed stamped out of rubber, the upper part sad, the lower full of laughing wrinkles. But his address surprised me, for we were not in the least related. I shook his horny hand, responding, «Hearty thanks, little brother.» «I call this good luck,» began little brother: «a room freshly scoured, apples roasting in the chimney, half a cold duck in the cupboard; and you all alone with cat and clock. It is easier talking when there are two, for the third is always in the way.»

The old man amused me immensely. I sat down on the bench beside him and asked after his wife and family. «Thanks, thanks,» he nodded, «all well and happy except our nestling Ille. She leaves home to-morrow, to eat her bread as a dressmaker in B——.»—«And the other children, where are they?»

«Flown away, long ago! Do you suppose, little sister, that I want to keep all fifteen at home like so many cabbages in a single bed?» Fifteen children! Almost triumphantly, little brother watched me. I owned almost as many brothers and sisters myself, and fifteen children were no marvel to me. So I asked if he were a grandfather too.

«Of course,» he answered gravely. «But I am going to tell you how I came by fifteen children. You know how we peasant folk give house and land to the eldest son, and only a few coppers to the youngest children. A bad custom, that leads to quarrels, and ends sometimes in murder. Fathers and mothers can't bring themselves to part with the property, and so they live with the eldest son, who doles out food and shelter, and gets the farm in the end. So, in time, a family has some rich members and more paupers. Now, we'd better sell the land and let the children share alike; but then that way breaks estates too. I was a younger child, and I received four hundred thalers;—a large sum forty years ago. I didn't know anything but field work. The saying that 'The peasant must be kept stupid or he will not obey' was still printed in all the books. So I had to look about for a family where a son was needed. One day, with my four hundred thalers in my pocket, I went to a farm where there was an unmarried daughter. When you go a-courting among us, you pretend to mean to buy a horse. That's the fashion. With us, a lie doesn't wear French rouge. The parents of Marianne (that was her name) made me welcome. Brown Bess was brought from the stable, and her neck, legs, and teeth examined. I showed my willingness to buy her, which meant as much as to say, 'Your daughter pleases me.' As proud as you please, I walked through the buildings. Everything in plenty, all right, not a nail wanting on the harrow, nor a cord missing from the harness. How I strutted! I saw myself master, and I was tickled to death to be as rich as my brother.

«But I reckoned without my host. On tiptoe I stole into the kitchen, where my sweetheart was frying ham and eggs. I thought I might snatch a kiss. Above the noise of the sizzling frying-pan and the crackling wood, I plainly heard the voice of my—well, let us say it—bride, weeping and complaining to an old house servant: 'It's a shame and a sin to enter matrimony with a lie. I can't wed this Michael: not because he is ugly; that doesn't matter in a man, but he comes too late! My heart belongs to poor Joseph, the woodcutter, and I'd sooner be turned out of doors than to make a false promise. Money blinds my mother's eyes!' Don't be surprised, little sister, that I remember these words so well. A son doesn't forget his father's blessing, nor a prisoner his sentence. This was my sentence to poverty and single-blessedness. I sent word to Marianne that she should be happy—and so she was.

"But now to my own story. I worked six years as farm hand for my rich brother, and then love overtook me. The little housemaid caught me in the net of her golden locks. What a fuss it made in our family! A peasant's pride is as stiff as that of your 'Vous' and 'Zus.' My girl had only a pair of willing hands and a good heart to give to an ugly, pock-marked being like me. My mother (God grant her peace!) caused her many a tear, and when I brought home my Lotte she wouldn't keep the peace until at last she found out that happiness depends on kindness more than on money. On the patch of land that I bought, my wife and I lived as happily as people live when there's love in the house and a bit of bread to spare. We worked hard and spent little. A long, scoured table, a wooden bench or so, a chest or two of coarse linen, and a few pots and pans—that was our furniture. The walls had never tasted whitewash, but Lotte kept them scoured. She went to church barefoot, and put on her shoes at the door. Good things such as coffee and plums, that the poorest hut has now-a-days, we never saw. We didn't save much, for crops sold cheap. But I didn't speculate, nor squeeze money from the sweat of the poor. In time five pretty little chatterboxes arrived, all flaxen-haired girls with blue eyes, or brown. I was satisfied with girls, but the mother hankered after a boy. That's a poor father that prefers a son to a daughter. A man ought to take boys and girls alike, just as God sends them. I was glad enough to work for my girls, and I didn't worry about their future, nor build castles in the air for them to live in. After fifteen years the boy arrived, but he took himself quickly out of the world and coaxed his mother away with him."

Little brother was silent, and bowed his snow-white head. My heart felt as if the dead wife flitted through the room and gently touched the old fellow's thin locks. I saw him kneeling at her death-bed, heard the little girls sobbing, and waited in silence till he drew himself up, sighing deeply:—

"My Lotte died; she left me alone. What didn't I promise the dear Lord in those black hours! My life, my savings, yea, all my children if He would but leave her to me. In vain. 'My thoughts are not thy thoughts, saith the Lord, and My ways are not thy ways.' It was night in my soul. I cried over my children, and I only half did my work. At night I tumbled into bed tearless and prayerless. Oh, sad time! God vainly knocked at my heart's door until the children fell ill. Oh, what would become of me if these flowers were gathered? What wealth these rosy mouths meant to me, how gladly would they smile away my sorrow! I had set myself up above the Lord. But by my children's bedside I prayed for grace. They all recovered. I took my motherless brood to God's temple to thank Him there. Church-going won't bring salvation, but staying away from church makes a man stupid and coarse.

"But I am forgetting, little sister. I started to tell you about my fifteen children. You see I made up my mind that I had to find a mother for the chicks. I wouldn't chain a young thing to my bonds, even if she understood housekeeping. I held to the saying, 'Equal wealth, equal birth, equal years make a good match.' When an old widower courts a young girl he looks at her faults with a hundred eyes when he measures her with his first wife. But a home without a wife is like spring without blossoms. So, thinking this way, I chose a widow with ten children."

Twirling his thumbs, little brother smiled gayly as he looked at me. "Five and ten make fifteen, I thought, and when fifteen prayers rise to heaven, the Lord must hear. My two eldest stepsons entered military service. We wouldn't spend all our money on the boys and then console our poor girls with a husband. I put three sons to trades. But my girls were my pride. They learned every kind of work. When they could cook, wash, and spin, we sent them into good households to learn more. Two married young. Some of the rest are seamstresses and housekeepers. One is a secretary, and our golden-haired Miez is lady's-maid to the Countess H——. Both these girls are betrothed. Miez is the brightest, and she managed to learn, even at the village school. So much is written about education nowadays," (little brother drew himself up proudly as he added, "I take a newspaper,") "but the real education is to keep children at work and make them unselfish. They must love their work.

Work and pray, these were my rules, and thank Heaven! all my children are good and industrious.

"Just think, last summer my dear girls sent me a suit of fine city clothes and money to go a journey, begging their old father to make them a visit. Oh, how pretty they looked when they showed me round the city in spite of my homespun, for I couldn't bring myself to wear the fine clothes, after all. The best dressed one was our little lady's-maid, who had a gold watch in her belt. So I said: 'Listen, child, that is not fit for you.' But she only laughed. 'Indeed it is, little father. If my gracious lady makes me a present, I'm not likely to be mistaken for her on that account.'—'And girls, are you contented to be in service?'—'Certainly, father: unless there are both masters and servants the world would go out of its grooves. My good Countess makes service so light, that we love and serve her. Yes, little father,' added Miez, 'my gracious mistress chose Gustav for me, and is going to pay for the wedding and start us in housekeeping—God bless her!' Now see what good such a woman does. If people would but learn that it takes wits to command as well as to obey, they would get along well enough in these new times of equality. Thank heaven! we country folk shan't be ruined by idleness. When I saw my thatched roof again, among the fir-trees, I felt as solemn as if I were going to prayers. The blue smoke looked like incense. I folded my hands, I thanked God."

Little brother arose, his eyes bright with tears. He cast a wistful look toward the apples in the chimney: "My old wife, little sister?"—"Certainly, take them all, little brother, you are heartily welcome to them."—"We are like children, my wife and I, we carry tidbits to each other, now that our birds have all flown away."—"That is right, old boy, and God keep thee!" I said. From the threshold the words echoed back, "God keep thee!"

Translation of Miss H. Geist.

STRUGGLE AND PEACE

A QUARTER-CENTURY warfare woke
No sabre clash nor powder smoke,
No triumph song nor battle cry;
Their shields no templared knights stood by.

Though fought were many battles hot,
Of any fight the world knew not
How great the perils often grew—
God only knew.

Within my deepest soul-depths torn,
In hands and feet wounds bleeding borne,
Trodden beneath the chargers' tread,
How I endured, felt, suffered, bled,
How wept and groaned I in my woe,
When scoffed the malice-breathing foe,
How pierced his scorn my spirit through,
God only knew.

The evening nears; cool zephyrs blow;
The struggle wild doth weaker grow;
The air with scarce a sigh is filled
From the pale mouth; the blood is stilled.
Quieted now my bitter pain;
A faint star lights the heavenly plain;
Peace cometh after want and woe—
My God doth know.

DO THOU LOVE, TOO!

THE waves they whisper
In Luna's glance,
Entrancing music
For the nixies' dance.
They beckon, smiling,
And wavewise woo,
While softly plashing:—
«Do thou love, too!»

In blossoming lindens
Doves fondly rear
Their tender fledglings
From year to year.
With never a pausing,
They bill and coo,
And twitter gently:—
«Do thou love, too!»

INVITATION

How long wilt stand outside and cower?
Come straight within, beloved guest.
The winds are fierce this wintry hour:
Come, stay awhile with me and rest.
You wander begging shelter vainly
A weary time from door to door;
I see what you have suffered plainly:
Come, rest with me and stray no more!

And nestle by me, trusting-hearted;
Lay in my loving hands your head:
Then back shall come your peace departed,
Through the world's baseness long since fled;
And deep from out your heart upspringing,
Love's downy wings will soar to view,
The darling smiles like magic bringing
Around your gloomy lips anew.

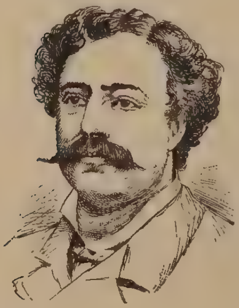
Come, rest: myself will here detain you,
So long as pulse of mine shall beat;
Nor shall my heart grow cold and pain you,
Till carried to your last retreat.
You gaze at me in doubting fashion,
Before the offered rapture dumb;
Tears and still tears your sole expression:
Bedew my bosom with them—come!

EDMONDO DE AMICIS

(1846–)

In 1869, 'Vita Militari' (Military Life), a collection of short stories, was perhaps the most popular Italian volume of the year. Read alike in court and cottage, it was everywhere discussed and enthusiastically praised. Its prime quality was that quivering sympathy which insures some success to any imaginative work, however crudely written. But these sketches of all the grim and amusing phases of Italian soldier life are drawn with an exquisite precision. The reader feels the breathless discouragement of the tired soldiers when new dusty vistas are revealed by a sudden turn in the road ('A Midsummer March'); understands the strong silent love between officer and orderly, suppressed by military etiquette ('The Orderly'); smiles with the soldiers at the pretty runaway boy, idol of the regiment ('The Son of the Regiment'); pities the humiliations of the conscript novice ('The Conscript'); thrills with the proud sorrow of the old man whose son's colonel tells the story of his heroic death ('Dead on the Field of Battle'). «When I had finished reading it,» said an Italian workman, «I would gladly have pressed the hand of the first soldier whom I happened to meet.» The author was only twenty-three, and has since given the world many delightful volumes, but nothing finer.

These sketches were founded upon personal knowledge, for De Amicis began life as a soldier. After his early education at Coni and Turin, he entered the military school at Modena, from which he was sent out as sub-lieutenant in the third regiment of the line. He saw active service in various expeditions against Sicilian brigands; and in the war with Austria he fought at the battle of Custozza. His literary power seems to have been early manifest; for in 1867 he became manager of a newspaper, L'Italia Militaire, at Florence; and in 1871, yielding to his friends' persuasions, he settled down to authorship at Turin. His second book was the 'Ricordi,' memorials dedicated to the youth of Italy, of national events which had come within his experience. Half a dozen later stories published together were also very popular, especially 'Gli Amicis di Collegio' (College Friends), 'Fortezza,' and 'La Casa Paterna' (The Paternal Home). He has written some graceful verse as well.


EDMONDO DE AMICIS

But De Amicis soon craved the stimulus of novel environments, of differing personalities; and he set out upon the travels which he has so delightfully recounted. This ardent Italian longed for the repose of «a gray sky,» a critic tells us. He went first to Holland, and experienced a joyous satisfaction in the careful art of that trim little land. Later, a visit to North Africa in the suite of the Italian ambassador prompted a brilliant volume, 'Morocco,' «which glitters and flashes like a Damascus blade.» Among his other well-known books, descriptive of other trips, are 'Holland and Its People,' 'Spain,' 'London,' 'Paris,' and 'Constantinople,' which, translated into many languages, have been widely read.

That unfortunate though not uncommon traveler who finds *ennui* everywhere must envy De Amicis his inexhaustible enthusiasm, his power of epicurean enjoyment in the color and glory of every land.

His is a curiously optimistic nature. Always perceiving the beautiful and picturesque in art and nature, he treats other aspects hopefully, and ignores them when he may. He catches what is characteristic in every nation as inevitably as he catches the physiognomy of a land with its skies and its waters, its flowers and its atmosphere. His is a realism transfigured by poetic imagination, which divines essential things and places them in high relief.

Very early in life De Amicis announced his love and admiration of Manzoni, of whom he called himself a disciple. But his is a very different mind. This Italian, born at Onéglia of Genoese parents, has inherited the emotional nature of his country. He sees everything with feeling, penetrating below the surface with sympathetic insight. Italy gives him his sensuous zest in life. But from France, through his love of her vigor and grace, his cordial admiration of her literature, he has gained a refining and strengthening influence. She has taught him that direct diction, that choice simplicity, which forsakes the stilted Italian of literary tradition for a style far simpler, stronger, and more natural.

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THE LIGHT

From ‹Constantinople›

And first of all, the light! One of my dearest delights at Constantinople was to see the sun rise and set, standing upon the bridge of the Sultana Validé. At dawn, in autumn, the Golden Horn is almost always covered by a light fog, behind which the city is seen vaguely, like those gauze curtains that descend upon the stage to conceal the preparations for a scenic spectacle. Scutari is quite hidden; nothing is to be seen but the dark uncertain outline of her hills. The bridge and the shores are deserted, Constantinople sleeps; the solitude and silence render the spectacle more solemn. The sky begins to grow golden behind the hills of Scutari. Upon that luminous strip are drawn, one by one, black and clear, the tops of the cypress trees in the vast cemetery, like an army of giants ranged upon the heights; and from one cape of the Golden Horn to the other there shines a tremulous light, faint as the first murmur of the awakening city. Then behind the cypresses of the Asiatic shore comes forth an eye of fire, and suddenly the white tops of the four minarets of Saint Sophia are tinted with deep rose. In a few minutes, from hill to hill, from mosque to mosque, down to the end of the Golden Horn, all the minarets, one after the other, turn rose color; all the domes, one by one, are silvered, the flush descends from terrace to terrace, the tremulous light spreads, the great veil melts, and all Stamboul appears, rosy and resplendent upon her heights, blue and violet along the shores, fresh and young, as if just risen from the waters.

As the sun rises, the delicacy of the first tints vanishes in an immense illumination, and everything remains bathed in white light until toward evening. Then the divine spectacle begins again. The air is so limpid that from Galata one can see clearly every distant tree, as far as Kadi-Kioi. The whole of the immense profile of Stamboul stands out against the sky with such a clearness of line and rigor of color, that every minaret, obelisk, and cypress-tree can be counted, one by one, from Seraglio Point to the cemetery of Eyub. The Golden Horn and the Bosphorus assume a wonderful ultramarine color; the heavens, the color of amethyst in the East, are afire behind Stamboul, tinting the horizon with infinite lights of rose and carbuncle, that make one think of the first day of the creation; Stamboul darkens, Galata becomes golden, and Scutari, struck by the last rays of the setting sun, with every pane of glass giving back the glow, looks like a city on fire.

And this is the moment to contemplate Constantinople. There is one rapid succession of the softest tints, pallid gold, rose and lilac, which quiver and float over the sides of the hills and the water, every moment giving and taking away the prize of beauty from each part of the city, and revealing a thousand modest graces of the landscape that have not dared to show themselves in the full light. Great melancholy suburbs are lost in the shadow of the valleys; little purple cities smile upon the heights; villages faint as if about to die; others die at once like extinguished flames; others, that seemed already dead, revive, and glow, and quiver yet a moment longer under the last ray of the sun. Then there is nothing left but two resplendent points upon the Asiatic shore,— the summit of Mount Bulgurlu, and the extremity of the cape that guards the entrance to the Propontis; they are at first two golden crowns, then two purple caps, then two rubies; then all Constantinople is in shadow, and ten thousand voices from ten thousand minarets announce the close of the day.

RESEMBLANCES

From ‹Constantinople›

In the first days, fresh as I was from the perusal of Oriental literature, I saw everywhere the famous personages of history and legend, and the figures that recalled them resembled sometimes so faithfully those that were fixed in my imagination, that I was constrained to stop and look at them. How many times have I seized my friend by the arm, and pointing to a person passing by, have exclaimed: «It is he, *cospetto!* do you not recognize him?» In the square of the Sultana Validé, I frequently saw the gigantic Turk who threw down millstones from the walls of Nicæa on the heads of the soldiers of Baglione; I saw in front of a mosque Umm Djemil, that old fury that sowed brambles and nettles before Mahomet's house; I met in the book bazaar, with a volume under his arm, Djemaleddin, the learned man of Broussa, who knew the whole of the Arab dictionary by heart; I passed quite close to the side of Ayesha, the favorite wife of the Prophet, and she fixed upon my face her eyes, brilliant and humid, like the reflection of stars in a well; I have recognized, in the At-Meidan, the famous beauty of that poor Greek woman killed by a cannon ball at the base of the serpentine column; I have been face to face, in the Fanar, with Kara-Abderrahman, the handsome young Turk of the time of Orkhan; I have seen Coswa, the she-camel of the Prophet; I have encountered Kara-bulut, Selim's black steed; I have met the poor poet Fignahi, condemned to go about Stamboul tied to an ass for having pierced with an insolent distich the Grand Vizier of Ibrahim; I have been in the same café with Soliman the Big, the monstrous admiral, whom four robust slaves hardly succeeded in lifting from the divan; Ali, the Grand Vizier, who could not find in all Arabia a horse that could carry him; Mahmoud Pasha, the ferocious Hercules that strangled the son of Soliman; and the stupid Ahmed Second, who continually repeated «Koso! Koso!» (Very well, very well) crouching before the door of the copyists' bazaar, in the square of Bajazet. All the personages of the ‹Thousand and One Nights,› the Aladdins, the Zobeides, the Sindbads, the Gulnares, the old Jewish merchants, possessors of enchanted carpets and wonderful lamps, passed before me like a procession of phantoms.

BIRDS

From ‹Constantinople›

Constantinople has one grace and gayety peculiar to itself, that comes from an infinite number of birds of every kind, for which the Turks nourish a warm sentiment and regard. Mosques, groves, old walls, gardens, palaces, all resound with song, the whistling and twittering of birds; everywhere wings are fluttering, and life and harmony abound. The sparrows enter the houses boldly, and eat out of women's and children's hands; swallows nest over the café doors, and under the arches of the bazaars; pigeons in innumerable swarms, maintained by legacies from sultans and private individuals, form garlands of black and white along the cornices of the cupolas and around the terraces of the minarets; sea-gulls dart and play over the water; thousands of turtle-doves coo amorously among the cypresses in the cemeteries; crows croak about the Castle of the Seven Towers halcyons come and go in long files between the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora; and storks sit upon the cupolas of the mausoleums. For the Turk, each one of these birds has a gentle meaning, or a benignant virtue: turtle-doves are favorable to lovers, swallows keep away fire from the roofs where they build their nests, storks make yearly pilgrimages to Mecca, halcyons carry the souls of the faithful to Paradise. Thus he protects and feeds them, through a sentiment of gratitude and piety; and they enliven the house, the sea, and the sepulchre. Every quarter of Stamboul is full of the noise of them, bringing to the city a sense of the pleasures of country life, and continually refreshing the soul with a reminder of nature.

CORDOVA

From ‹Spain›

For a long distance the country offers no new aspect to the feverish curiosity of the tourist. At Vilches there is a vast plain, and beyond there the open country of Tolosa, where Alphonso VIII., King of Castile, gained the celebrated victory "de las Navas" over the Mussulman army. The sky was very clear, and in the distance one could see the mountains of the Sierra de Segura. Suddenly, there comes over one a sensation which seems to respond to a suppressed exclamation of surprise: the first aloes with their thick leaves, the unexpected heralds of tropical vegetation, rise on both sides of the road. Beyond, the fields studded with flowers begin to appear. The first are studded, those which follow almost covered, then come vast stretches of ground entirely clothed with poppies, daisies, lilies, wild mushrooms, and ranunculuses, so that the country (as it presents itself to view) looks like a succession of immense purple, gold, and snowy-hued carpets. In the distance, among the trees, are innumerable blue, white, and yellow streaks, as far as the eye can reach; and nearer, on the banks of the ditches, the elevations of ground, the slopes, and even on the edge of the road are flowers in beds, clumps, and clusters, one above the other, grouped in the form of great bouquets, and trembling on their stalks, which one can almost touch with his hand. Then there are fields white with great blades of grain, flanked by plantations of roses, orange groves, immense olive groves, and hillsides varied by a thousand shades of green, surmounted by ancient Moorish towers, scattered with many-colored houses; and between the one and the other are white and slender bridges that cross rivulets hidden by the trees.

On the horizon appear the snowy caps of the Sierra Nevada; under that white streak lie the undulating blue ones of the nearer mountains. The country becomes more varied and flourishing; Arjonilla lies in a grove of olives, whose boundary one cannot see; Pedro Abad, in the midst of a plain, covered with vineyards and fruit-trees; Ventas di Alcolea, on the last hills of the Sierra Nevada, peopled with villas and gardens. We are approaching Cordova, the train flies along, we see little stations half hidden by trees and flowers, the wind carries the rose leaves into the carriages, great butterflies fly near the windows, a delicious perfume permeates the air, the travelers sing; we pass through an enchanted garden, the aloes, oranges, palms, and villas grow more frequent; and at last we hear a cry—"Here is Cordova!"

How many lovely pictures and grand recollections the sound of that name awakens in one's mind! Cordova,—the ancient pearl of the East, as the Arabian poets call it,—the city of cities; Cordova of the thirty suburbs and three thousand mosques, which inclosed within her walls the greatest temple of Islam! Her fame extended throughout the East, and obscured the glory of ancient Damascus. The faithful came from the most remote regions of Asia to banks of the Guadalquivir to prostrate themselves in the marvelous Mihrab of her mosque, in the light of the thousand bronze lamps cast from the bells of the cathedrals of Spain. Hither flocked artists, savants, poets from every part of the Mahometan world to her flourishing schools, immense libraries, and the magnificent courts of her caliphs. Riches and beauty flowed in, attracted by the fame of her splendor. From here they scattered, eager for knowledge, along the coasts of Africa, through the schools of Tunis, Cairo, Bagdad, Cufa, and even to India and China, in order to gather inspiration and records; and the poetry sung on the slopes of the Sierra Morena flew from lyre to lyre, as far as the valleys of the Caucasus, to excite the ardor for pilgrimages. The beautiful, powerful, and wise Cordova, crowned with three thousand villages, proudly raised her white minarets in the midst of orange groves, and spread around the valley a voluptuous atmosphere of joy and glory.

I leave the train, cross a garden, look around me. I am alone. The travelers who were with me disappear here and there; I still hear the noise of a carriage which is rolling off; then all is quiet. It is midday, the sky is very clear, and the air suffocating. I see two white houses; it is the opening of a street; I enter and go on. The street is narrow, the houses as small as the little villas on the slopes of artificial gardens, almost all one story in height, with windows a few feet from the ground, the roofs so low that one could almost touch them with a stick, and the walls very white. The street turns; I look, see no one, and hear neither step nor voice. I say to myself:—"This must be an abandoned street!" and try another one, in which the houses are white, the windows closed, and there is nothing but silence and solitude around me. "Why, where am I?" I ask myself. I go on; the street, which is so narrow that a carriage could not pass, begins to wind; on the right and left I see other deserted streets, white houses, and closed windows. My step resounds as if in a corridor. The whiteness of the walls is so vivid that even the reflection is trying, and I am obliged to walk with my eyes half closed, for it really seems as if I were making my way through the snow. I reach a small square; everything is closed, and no one is to be seen. At this point a vague feeling of melancholy seizes me, such as I have never experienced before; a mixture of pleasure and sadness, similar to that which comes to children when, after a long run, they reach a lonely rural spot and rejoice in their discovery, but with a certain trepidation lest they should be too far from home. Above many roofs rise the palm-trees of inner gardens. Oh, fantastic legends of Odalisk and Caliph! On I go from street to street, and square to square; I begin to meet some people, but they pass and disappear like phantoms. All the streets resemble each other; the houses have only three or four windows; and not a spot, scrawl, or crack is to be seen on the walls, which are as smooth and white as a sheet of paper. From time to time I hear a whisper behind a blind, and see, almost at the same moment, a dark head, with a flower in the hair, appear and disappear. I look in at a door. . . .

A *patio!* How shall I describe a *patio?* It is not a court, nor a garden, nor a room; but it is all three things combined. Between the patio and the street there is a vestibule. On the four sides of the patio rise slender columns, which support, up to a level with the first floor, a species of gallery inclosed in glass; above the gallery is stretched a canvas, which shades the court. The vestibule is paved with marble, the door flanked by columns, surmounted by bas-reliefs, and closed by a slender iron gate of graceful design. At the end of the patio there is a fountain; and all around are scattered chairs, work-tables, pictures, and vases of flowers. I run to another door: there is another patio, with its walls covered with ivy, and a number of niches holding little statues, busts, and urns. I look in at a third door: here is another patio, with its walls worked in mosaics, a palm in the centre, and a mass of flowers all around. I stop at a fourth door: after the patio there is another vestibule, after this a second patio, in which one sees other statues, columns, and fountains. All these rooms and gardens are so neat and clean that one could pass his hand over the walls and on the ground without leaving a trace; and they are fresh, odorous, and lighted by an uncertain light, which increases their beauty and mysterious appearance.

On I go at random from street to street. As I walk, my curiosity increases and I quicken my pace. It seems impossible that a whole city can be like this; I am afraid of stumbling across some house or coming into some street that will remind me of other cities, and disturb my beautiful dream. But no, the dream lasts; for everything is small, lovely, and mysterious. At every hundred steps I reach a deserted square, in which I stop and hold my breath; from time to time there appears a cross-road, and not a living soul is to be seen; everything is white, the windows closed, and silence reigns on all sides. At each door there is a new spectacle; there are arches, columns, flowers, jets of water, and palms; a marvelous variety of design, tints, light, and perfume; here the odor of roses, there of oranges, farther on of pinks; and with this perfume a whiff of fresh air, and with the air a subdued sound of women's voices, the rustling of leaves, and the singing of birds. It is a sweet and varied harmony, that without disturbing the silence of the streets, soothes the ear like the echo of distant music. Ah! it is not a dream! Madrid, Italy, Europe, are indeed far away! Here one lives another life, and breathes the air of a different world, — for I am in the East.

THE LAND OF PLUCK

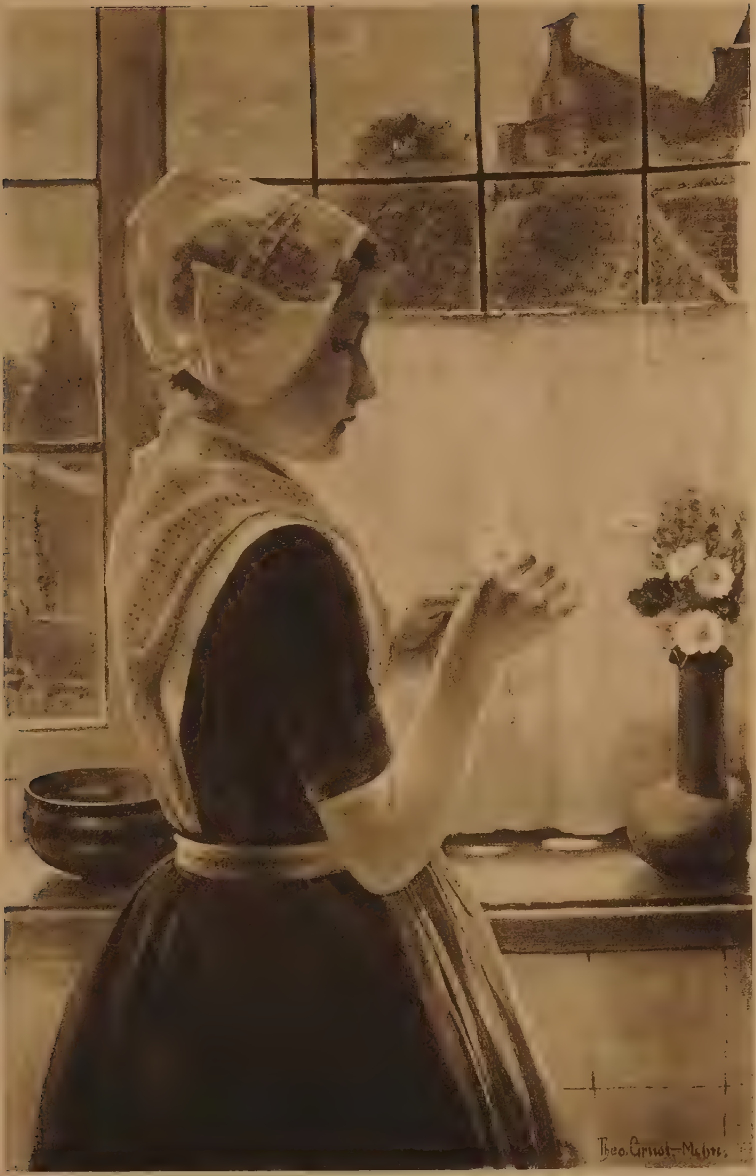
From 'Holland and Its People'

WHOEVER looks for the first time at a large map of Holland wonders that a country so constituted can continue to exist. At the first glance it is difficult to see whether land or water predominates, or whether Holland belongs most to the continent or to the sea. Those broken and compressed coasts; those deep bays; those great rivers that, losing the aspect of rivers, seem bringing new seas to the sea; that sea which, changing itself into rivers, penetrates the land and breaks it into archipelagoes; the lakes, the vast morasses, the canals crossing and recrossing each other, all combine to give the idea of a country that may at any moment disintegrate and disappear. Seals and beavers would seem to be its rightful inhabitants; but since there are men bold enough to live in it, they surely cannot ever sleep in peace.

What sort of a country Holland is, has been told by many in few words. Napoleon said it was an alluvion of French rivers,— the Rhine, the Scheldt, and the Meuse,— and with this pretext he added it to the Empire. One writer has defined it as a sort of transition between land and sea. Another, as an immense crust of earth floating on the water. Others, an annex of the old

A DUTCH GIRL.

Photogravure from Painting by Th. Grust


Theo. Groot-Mehn.

continent, the China of Europe, the end of the earth and the beginning of the ocean, a measureless raft of mud and sand; and Philip II. called it the country nearest to hell.

But they all agreed upon one point, and all expressed it in the same words: — Holland is a conquest made by man over the sea; it is an artificial country: the Hollanders made it; it exists because the Hollanders preserve it; it will vanish whenever the Hollanders shall abandon it.

To comprehend this truth, we must imagine Holland as it was when first inhabited by the first German tribes that wandered away in search of a country.

It was almost uninhabitable. There were vast tempestuous lakes, like seas, touching one another; morass beside morass; one tract after another covered with brushwood; immense forests of pines, oaks, and alders, traversed by herds of wild horses, and so thick were these forests that tradition says one could travel leagues passing from tree to tree without ever putting foot to the ground. The deep bays and gulfs carried into the heart of the country the fury of the northern tempests. Some provinces disappeared once every year under the waters of the sea, and were nothing but muddy tracts, neither land nor water, where it was impossible either to walk or to sail. The large rivers, without sufficient inclination to descend to the sea, wandered here and there uncertain of their way, and slept in monstrous pools and ponds among the sands of the coasts. It was a sinister place, swept by furious winds, beaten by obstinate rains, veiled in a perpetual fog, where nothing was heard but the roar of the sea and the voices of wild beasts and birds of the ocean. The first people who had the courage to plant their tents there, had to raise with their own hands dikes of earth to keep out the rivers and the sea, and lived within them like shipwrecked men upon desolate islands, venturing forth at the subsidence of the waters in quest of food in the shape of fish and game, and gathering the eggs of marine birds upon the sand.

Cæsar, passing by, was the first to name this people. The other Latin historians speak with compassion and respect of these intrepid barbarians who lived upon a "floating land," exposed to the intemperance of a cruel sky and the fury of the mysterious northern sea; and the imagination pictures the Roman soldiers, who, from the heights of the uttermost citadels of the empire, beaten by the waves, contemplated with wonder and pity those wandering tribes upon their desolate land, like a race accursed of heaven.

Now, if we remember that such a region has become one of the most fertile, wealthiest, and best regulated of the countries of the world, we shall understand the justice of the saying that Holland is a conquest made by man. But, it must be added, the conquest goes on forever.

To explain this fact — to show how the existence of Holland, in spite of the great defensive works constructed by the inhabitants, demands an incessant and most perilous struggle — it will be enough to touch here and there upon a few of the principal vicissitudes of her physical history, from the time when her inhabitants had already reduced her to a habitable country.

Tradition speaks of a great inundation in Friesland in the sixth century. From that time every gulf, every island, and it may be said every city, in Holland has its catastrophe to record. In thirteen centuries, it is recorded that one great inundation, beside smaller ones, has occurred every seven years; and the country being all plain, these inundations were veritable floods. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, the sea destroyed a part of a fertile peninsula near the mouth of the Ems, and swallowed up more than thirty villages. In the course of the same century, a series of inundations opened an immense chasm in northern Holland, and formed the Zuyder Zee, causing the death of more than eighty thousand persons. In 1421 a tempest swelled the Meuse, so that in one night the waters overwhelmed seventy-two villages and one hundred thousand inhabitants. In 1532 the sea burst the dikes of Zealand, destroying hundreds of villages, and covering forever a large tract of country. In 1570 a storm caused another inundation in Zealand and in the province of Utrecht; Amsterdam was invaded by the waters, and in Friesland twenty thousand people were drowned. Other great inundations took place in the seventeenth century; two terrible ones at the beginning and the end of the eighteenth; one in 1825 that desolated North Holland, Friesland, Over-Yssel, and Gueldres; and another great one of the Rhine, in 1855, which invaded Gueldres and the province of Utrecht, and covered a great part of North Brabant. Beside these great catastrophes, there happened in different centuries innumerable smaller ones, which would have been famous in any other country, but which in Holland are scarcely remembered: like the rising of the lake of

Haarlem, itself the result of an inundation of the sea; flourishing cities of the gulf of Zuyder Zee vanished under the waters; the islands of Zealand covered again and again by the sea, and again emerging; villages of the coast, from Helder to the mouths of the Meuse, from time to time inundated and destroyed; and in all these inundations immense loss of life of men and animals. It is plain that miracles of courage, constancy, and industry must have been accomplished by the Hollanders, first in creating and afterwards in preserving such a country. The enemy from which they had to wrest it was triple: the sea, the lakes, the rivers. They drained the lakes, drove back the sea, and imprisoned the rivers.

To drain the lakes the Hollanders pressed the air into their service. The lakes, the marshes, were surrounded by dikes, the dikes by canals; and an army of windmills, putting in motion force-pumps, turned the water into the canals, which carried it off to the rivers and the sea. Thus vast tracts of land buried under the water saw the sun, and were transformed, as if by magic, into fertile fields, covered with villages, and intersected by canals and roads. In the seventeenth century, in less than forty years, twenty-six lakes were drained. At the beginning of the present century, in North Holland alone, more than six thousand hectares (or fifteen thousand acres) were thus redeemed from the waters; in South Holland, before 1844, twenty-nine thousand hectares; in the whole of Holland, from 1500 to 1858, three hundred and fifty-five thousand hectares. Substituting steam-mills for windmills, in thirty-nine months was completed the great undertaking of the draining of the lake of Haarlem, which measured forty-four kilometres in circumference, and forever threatened with its tempests the cities of Haarlem, Amsterdam, and Leyden. And they are now meditating the prodigious work of drying up the Zuyder Zee, which embraces an area of more than seven hundred square kilometres.

The rivers, another eternal enemy, cost no less of labor and sacrifice. Some, like the Rhine, which lost itself in the sands before reaching the sea, had to be channeled and defended at their mouths, against the tides, by formidable cataracts; others, like the Meuse, bordered by dikes as powerful as those that were raised against the ocean; others, turned from their course; the wandering waters gathered together; the course of the affluents regulated; the waters divided with rigorous measure in order to retain that enormous mass of liquid in equilibrium, where the slightest inequality might cost a province; and in this way all the rivers that formerly spread their devastating floods about the country were disciplined into channels and constrained to do service.

But the most tremendous struggle was the battle with the ocean. Holland is in great part lower than the level of the sea; consequently, everywhere that the coast is not defended by sandbanks it has to be protected by dikes. If these interminable bulwarks of earth, granite, and wood were not there to attest the indomitable courage and perseverance of the Hollanders, it would not be believed that the hand of man could, even in many centuries, have accomplished such a work. In Zealand alone the dikes extend to a distance of more than four hundred kilometres. The western coast of the island of Walcheren is defended by a dike, in which it is computed that the expense of construction added to that of preservation, if it were put out at interest, would amount to a sum equal in value to that which the dike itself would be worth were it made of massive copper. Around the city of Helder, at the northern extremity of North Holland, extends a dike ten kilometres long, constructed of masses of Norwegian granite, which descends more than sixty metres into the sea. The whole province of Friesland, for the length of eighty-eight kilometres, is defended by three rows of piles sustained by masses of Norwegian and German granite. Amsterdam, all the cities of the Zuyder Zee, and all the islands, — fragments of vanished lands, — which are strung like beads between Friesland and North Holland, are protected by dikes. From the mouths of the Ems to those of the Scheldt, Holland is an impenetrable fortress, of whose immense bastions the mills are the towers, the cataracts are the gates, the islands the advanced forts; and like a true fortress, it shows to its enemy, the sea, only the tops of its bell-towers and the roofs of its houses, as if in defiance and derision.

Holland is a fortress, and her people live as in a fortress, on a war footing with the sea. An army of engineers, directed by the Minister of the Interior, spread over the country, and, ordered like an army, continually spy the enemy, watch over the internal waters, foresee the bursting of the dikes, order and direct the defensive works. The expenses of the war are divided, — one part to the State, one part to the provinces; every proprietor pays, beside the general imposts, a special impost for the dikes, in proportion to the extent of his lands and their proximity to the water. An accidental rupture, an inadvertence, may cause a flood; the peril is unceasing; the sentinels are at their posts upon the bulwarks; at the first assault of the sea, they shout the war-cry, and Holland sends men, material, and money. And even when there is no great battle, a quiet, silent struggle is forever going on. The innumerable mills, even in the drained districts, continue to work unresting, to absorb and turn into the canals the water that falls in rain and that which filters in from the sea. Every day the cataracts of the bays and rivers close their gigantic gates against the high tide trying to rush into the heart of the land. The work of strengthening dikes, fortifying sand-banks with plantations, throwing out new dikes where the banks are low, straight as great lances, vibrating in the bosom of the sea and breaking the first impetus of the wave, is forever going on. And the sea eternally knocks at the river-gates, beats upon the ramparts, growls on every side her ceaseless menace, lifting her curious waves as if to see the land she counts as hers, piling up banks of sand before the gates to kill the commerce of the cities, forever gnawing, scratching, digging at the coast; and failing to overthrow the ramparts upon which she foams and fumes in angry effort, she casts at their feet ships full of the dead, that they may announce to the rebellious country her fury and her strength.

In the midst of this great and terrible struggle Holland is transformed: Holland is the land of transformations. A geographical map of that country as it existed eight centuries ago is not recognizable. Transforming the sea, men also are transformed. The sea, at some points, drives back the land; it takes portions from the continent, leaves them and takes them again; joins islands to the mainland with ropes of sand, as in the case of Zealand; breaks off bits from the mainland and makes new islands, as in Wieringen; retires from certain coasts and makes land cities out of what were cities of the sea, as Leuvarde; converts vast tracts of plain into archipelagoes of a hundred islets, as Biisbosch; separates a city from the land, as Dordrecht; forms new gulfs two leagues broad, like the gulf of Dollart; divides two provinces with a new sea, like North Holland and Friesland. The effect of the inundations is to cause the level of the sea to rise in some places and to sink in others; sterile lands are fertilized by the slime of the rivers, fertile lands are changed into deserts of sand. With the transformations of the waters alternate the transformations of labor. Islands are united to continents, like the island of Ameland; entire provinces are reduced to islands, as North Holland will be by the new canal of Amsterdam, which is to separate it from South Holland; lakes as large as provinces disappear altogether, like the lake of Beemster; by the extraction of peat, land is converted into lakes, and these lakes are again transformed into meadows. And thus the country changes its aspect according to the violence of nature or the needs of men. And while one goes over it with the latest map in hand, one may be sure that the map will be useless in a few years, because even now there are new gulfs in process of formation, tracts of land just ready to be detached from the mainland, and great canals being cut that will carry life to uninhabited districts.

But Holland has done more than defend herself against the waters; she has made herself mistress of them, and has used them for her own defense. Should a foreign army invade her territory, she has but to open her dikes and unchain the sea and the rivers, as she did against the Romans, against the Spaniards, against the army of Louis XIV., and defend the land cities with her fleet. Water was the source of her poverty, she has made it the source of wealth. Over the whole country extends an immense network of canals, which serves both for the irrigation of the land and as a means of communication. The cities, by means of canals, communicate with the sea; canals run from town to town, and from them to villages, which are themselves bound together by these watery ways, and are connected even to the houses scattered over the country; smaller canals surround the fields and orchards, pastures and kitchen-gardens, serving at once as boundary wall, hedge, and road-way; every house is a little port. Ships, boats, rafts, move about in all directions, as in other places carts and carriages. The canals are the arteries of Holland, and the water her life-blood. But even setting aside the canals, the draining of the lakes, and the defensive works, on every side are seen the traces of marvelous undertakings. The soil, which in other countries is a gift of nature, is in Holland a work of men's hands. Holland draws the greater part of her wealth from commerce; but before commerce comes the cultivation of the soil; and the soil had to be created. There were sand-banks interspersed with layers of peat, broad downs swept by the winds, great tracts of barren land apparently condemned to an eternal sterility. The first elements of manufacture, iron and coal, were wanting; there was no wood, because the forests had already been destroyed by tempests when agriculture began; there was no stone, there were no metals. Nature, says a Dutch poet, had refused all her gifts to Holland; the Hollanders had to do everything in spite of nature. They began by fertilizing the sand. In some places they formed a productive soil with earth brought from a distance, as a garden is made; they spread the siliceous dust of the downs over the too watery meadows; they mixed with the sandy earth the remains of peat taken from the bottoms; they extracted clay to lend fertility to the surface of their lands; they labored to break up the downs with the plow: and thus in a thousand ways, and continually fighting off the menacing waters, they succeeded in bringing Holland to a state of cultivation not inferior to that of more favored regions. That Holland, that sandy, marshy country which the ancients considered all but uninhabitable, now sends out yearly from her confines agricultural products to the value of a hundred millions of francs, possesses about one million three hundred thousand head of cattle, and in proportion to the extent of her territory may be accounted one of the most populous of European States.

It may be easily understood how the physical peculiarities of their country must influence the Dutch people; and their genius is in perfect harmony with the character of Holland. It is sufficient to contemplate the monuments of their great struggle with the sea in order to understand that their distinctive characteristics must be firmness and patience, accompanied by a calm and constant courage. That glorious battle, and the consciousness of owing everything to their own strength, must have infused and fortified in them a high sense of dignity and an indomitable spirit of liberty and independence. The necessity of a constant struggle, of a continuous labor, and of perpetual sacrifices in defense of their existence, forever taking them back to a sense of reality, must have made them a highly practical and economical people; good sense should be their most salient quality, economy one of their chief virtues; they must be excellent in all useful arts, sparing of diversion, simple even in their greatness; succeeding in what they undertake by dint of tenacity and a thoughtful and orderly activity; more wise than heroic; more conservative than creative; giving no great architects to the edifice of modern thought, but the ablest of workmen, a legion of patient and laborious artisans. And by virtue of these qualities of prudence, phlegmatic activity, and the spirit of conservatism, they are ever advancing, though by slow degrees; they acquire gradually, but never lose what they have gained; holding stubbornly to their ancient customs; preserving almost intact, and despite the neighborhood of three great nations, their own originality; preserving it through every form of government, through foreign invasions, through political and religious wars, and in spite of the immense concourse of strangers from every country that are always coming among them; and remaining, in short, of all the northern races, that one which, though ever advancing in the path of civilization, has kept its antique stamp most clearly.

It is enough also to remember its form in order to comprehend that this country of three millions and a half of inhabitants, although bound in so compact a political union, although recognizable among all the other northern peoples by certain traits peculiar to the population of all its provinces, must present a great variety. And so it is in fact. Between Zealand and Holland proper, between Holland and Friesland, between Friesland and Gueldres, between Groningen and Brabant, in spite of vicinity and so many common ties, there is no less difference than between the more distant provinces of Italy and France; difference of language, costume, and character; difference of race and of religion. The communal régime has impressed an indelible mark upon this people, because in no other country does it so conform to the nature of things. The country is divided into various groups of interests organized in the same manner as the hydraulic system. Whence, association and mutual help against the common enemy, the sea; but liberty for local institutions and forces. Monarchy has not extinguished the ancient municipal spirit, and this it is that renders impossible a complete fusion of the State, in all the great States that have made the attempt. The great rivers and gulfs are at the same time commercial roads serving as national bonds between the different provinces, and barriers which defend old traditions and old customs in each.

THE DUTCH MASTERS

From ‹Holland and Its People›

THE Dutch school of painting has one quality which renders it particularly attractive to us Italians; it is above all others the most different from our own, the very antithesis or the opposite pole of art. The Dutch and Italian schools are the most original, or, as has been said, the only two to which the title rigorously belongs; the others being only daughters or younger sisters, more or less resembling them.

Thus even in painting Holland offers that which is most sought after in travel and in books of travel: the new.

Dutch painting was born with the liberty and independence of Holland. As long as the northern and southern provinces of the Low Countries remained under the Spanish rule and in the Catholic faith, Dutch painters painted like Belgian painters; they studied in Belgium, Germany, and Italy; Heemskerk imitated Michael Angelo, Bloemart followed Correggio, and «Il Moro» copied Titian, not to indicate others: and they were one and all pedantic imitators, who added to the exaggerations of the Italian style a certain German coarsenesss, the result of which was a bastard style of painting, still inferior to the first, childish, stiff in design, crude in color, and completely wanting in chiaroscuro, but at least not a servile imitation, and becoming, as it were, a faint prelude of the true Dutch art that was to be.

With the war of independence, liberty, reform, and painting also were renewed. With religious traditions fell artistic traditions; the nude nymphs, Madonnas, saints, allegory, mythology, the ideal—all the old edifice fell to pieces. Holland, animated by a new life, felt the need of manifesting and expanding it in a new way; the small country, become all at once glorious and formidable, felt the desire for illustration; the faculties which had been excited and strengthened in the grand undertaking of creating a nation, now that the work was completed, overflowed and ran into new channels. The conditions of the country were favorable to the revival of art. The supreme dangers were conjured away; there was security, prosperity, a splendid future; the heroes had done their duty, and the artists were permitted to come to the front; Holland, after many sacrifices, and much suffering, issued victoriously from the struggle, lifted her face among her people and smiled. And that smile is art.

What that art would necessarily be, might have been guessed even had no monument of it remained. A pacific, laborious, practical people, continually beaten down, to quote a great German poet, to prosaic realities by the occupations of a vulgar burgher life; cultivating its reason at the expense of its imagination; living, consequently, more in clear ideas than in beautiful images; taking refuge from abstractions; never darting its thoughts beyond that nature with which it is in perpetual battle; seeing only that which is, enjoying only that which it can possess, making its happiness consist in the tranquil ease and honest sensuality of a life without violent passions or exorbitant desires; — such a people must have tranquillity also in their art, they must love an art that pleases without startling the mind, which addresses the senses rather than the spirit; an art full of repose, precision, and delicacy, though material like their lives: in one word, a realistic art, in which they can see themselves as they are and as they are content to be.

The artists began by tracing that which they saw before their eyes — the house. The long winters, the persistent rains, the dampness, the variableness of the climate, obliged the Hollander to stay within doors the greater part of the year. He loved his little house, his shell, much better than we love our abodes, for the reason that he had more need of it, and stayed more within it; he provided it with all sorts of conveniences, caressed it, made much of it; he liked to look out from his well-stopped windows at the falling snow and the drenching rain, and to hug himself with the thought, "Rage, tempest, I am warm and safe!" Snug in his shell, his faithful housewife beside him, his children about him, he passed the long autumn and winter evenings in eating much, drinking much, smoking much, and taking his well-earned ease after the cares of the day were over. The Dutch painters represented these houses and this life in little pictures proportionate to the size of the walls on which they were to hang; the bed-chambers that make one feel a desire to sleep, the kitchens, the tables set out, the fresh and smiling faces of the house-mothers, the men at their ease around the fire; and with that conscientious realism which never forsakes them, they depict the dozing cat, the yawning dog, the clucking hen, the broom, the vegetables, the scattered pots and pans, the chicken ready for the spit. Thus they represent life in all its scenes, and in every grade of the social scale — the dance, the *conversazione*, the orgie, the feast, the game; and thus did Terburg, Metzu, Netscher, Dow, Mieris, Steen, Brouwer, and Van Ostade become famous.

After depicting the house, they turned their attention to the country. The stern climate allowed but a brief time for the admiration of nature, but for this very reason Dutch artists admired her all the more; they saluted the spring with a livelier joy, and permitted that fugitive smile of heaven to stamp itself more deeply on their fancy. The country was not beautiful, but it was twice dear because it had been torn from the sea and from the foreign oppressor. The Dutch artist painted it lovingly; he represented it simply, ingenuously, with a sense of intimacy which at that time was not to be found in Italian or Belgian landscape. The flat, monotonous country had, to the Dutch painter's eyes, a marvelous variety. He caught all the mutations of the sky, and knew the value of the water, with its reflections, its grace and freshness, and its power of illuminating everything. Having no mountains, he took the dikes for background; with no forests, he imparted to a single group of trees all the mystery of a forest; and he animated the whole with beautiful animals and white sails.

The subjects of their pictures are poor enough, — a windmill, a canal, a gray sky; but how they make one think! A few Dutch painters, not content with nature in their own country, came to Italy in search of hills, luminous skies, and famous ruins; and another band of select artists is the result, — Both, Swanevelt, Pynacker, Breenberg, Van Laer, Asselyn. But the palm remains with the landscapists of Holland; with Wynants the painter of morning, with Van der Neer the painter of night, with Ruysdael the painter of melancholy, with Hobbema the illustrator of windmills, cabins, and kitchen gardens, and with others who have restricted themselves to the expression of the enchantment of nature as she is in Holland.

Simultaneously with landscape art was born another kind of painting, especially peculiar to Holland, — animal painting. Animals are the riches of the country; that magnificent race of cattle which has no rival in Europe for fecundity and beauty. The Hollanders, who owe so much to them, treat them, one may say, as part of the population; they wash them, comb them, dress them, and love them dearly. They are to be seen everywhere; they are reflected in all the canals, and dot with points of black and white the immense fields that stretch on every side, giving an air of peace and comfort to every place, and exciting in the spectator's heart a sentiment of Arcadian gentleness and patriarchal serenity. The Dutch artists studied these animals in all their varieties, in all their habits, and divined, as one may say, their inner life and sentiments, animating the tranquil beauty of the landscape with their forms. Rubens, Luyders, Paul de Vos, and other Belgian painters, had drawn animals with admirable mastery; but all these are surpassed by the Dutch artists Van der Velde, Berghem, Karel du Jardin, and by the prince of animal painters, Paul Potter, whose famous «Bull,» in the gallery of the Hague, deserves to be placed in the Vatican beside the «Transfiguration» by Raphael.

In yet another field are the Dutch painters great, — the sea. The sea, their enemy, their power, and their glory, forever threatening their country, and entering in a hundred ways into their lives and fortunes; that turbulent North Sea, full of sinister color, with a light of infinite melancholy upon it, beating forever upon a desolate coast, must subjugate the imagination of the artist. He passes, indeed, long hours on the shore, contemplating its tremendous beauty, ventures upon its waves to study the effects of tempests, buys a vessel and sails with his wife and family, observing and making notes, follows the fleet into battle and takes part in the fight; and in this way are made marine painters like William Van der Velde the elder and William the younger, like Backhuysen, Dubbels, and Stork.

Another kind of painting was to arise in Holland, as the expression of the character of the people and of republican manners. A people which without greatness had done so many great things, as Michelet says, must have its heroic painters, if we call them so, destined to illustrate men and events. But this school of painting,— precisely because the people were without greatness, or to express it better, without the form of greatness,— modest, inclined to consider all equal before the country, because all had done their duty, abhorring adulation, and the glorification in one only of the virtues and the triumph of many,— this school has to illustrate not a few men who have excelled, and a few extraordinary facts, but all classes of citizenship gathered among the most ordinary and pacific of burgher life. From this come the great pictures which represent five, ten, thirty persons together, arquebusiers, mayors, officers, professors, magistrates, administrators; seated or standing around a table, feasting and conversing; of life size, most faithful likenesses; grave, open faces, expressing that secure serenity of conscience by which may be divined rather than seen the nobleness of a life consecrated to one's country, the character of that strong, laborious epoch, the masculine virtues of that excellent generation; all this set off by the fine costume of the time, so admirably combining grace and dignity,—those gorgets, those doublets, those black mantles, those silken scarves and ribbons, those arms and banners. In this field stand pre-eminent Van der Helst, Hals, Govaert, Flink, and Bol.

Descending from the consideration of the various kinds of painting, to the special manner by means of which the artist excelled in treatment, one leads all the rest as the distinctive feature of Dutch painting—the light.

The light in Holland, by reason of the particular conditions of its manifestation, could not fail to give rise to a special manner of painting. A pale light, waving with marvelous mobility through an atmosphere impregnated with vapor, a nebulous veil continually and abruptly torn, a perpetual struggle between light and shadow,—such was the spectacle which attracted the eye of the artist. He began to observe and to reproduce all this agitation of the heavens, this struggle which animates with varied and fantastic life the solitude of nature in Holland; and in representing it, the struggle passed into his soul, and instead of representing he created. Then he caused the two elements to contend under his hand; he accumulated darkness that he might split and seam it with all manner of luminous effects and sudden gleams of light; sunbeams darted through the rifts, sunset reflections and the yellow rays of lamp-light were blended with delicate manipulation into mysterious shadows, and their dim depths were peopled with half-seen forms; and thus he created all sorts of contrasts, enigmas, play and effect of strange and unexpected chiaroscuro. In this field, among many, stand conspicuous Gerard Dow, the author of the famous four-candle picture, and the great magician and sovereign illuminator Rembrandt.

Another marked feature of Dutch painting was to be color. Besides the generally accepted reasons that in a country where there are no mountainous horizons, no varied prospects, no great *coup d'œil*,—no forms, in short, that lend themselves to design,—the artist's eye must inevitably be attracted by color; and that this might be peculiarly the case in Holland, where the uncertain light, the fog-veiled atmosphere, confuse and blend the outlines of all objects, so that the eye, unable to fix itself upon the form, flies to color as the principal attribute that nature presents to it,— besides these reasons, there is the fact that in a country so flat, so uniform, and so gray as Holland, there is the same need of color as in southern lands there is need of shade. The Dutch artists did but follow the imperious taste of their countrymen, who painted their houses in vivid colors, as well as their ships, and in some places the trunks of their trees and the palings and fences of their fields and gardens; whose dress was of the gayest, richest hues; who loved tulips and hyacinths even to madness. And thus the Dutch painters were potent colorists, and Rembrandt was their chief.

Realism, natural to the calmness and slowness of the Dutch character, was to give to their art yet another distinctive feature, — finish, which was carried to the very extreme of possibility. It is truly said that the leading quality of the people may be found in their pictures; viz., patience. Everything is represented with the minuteness of a daguerreotype; every vein in the wood of a piece of furniture, every fibre in a leaf, the threads of cloth, the stitches in a patch, every hair upon an animal's coat, every wrinkle in a man's face; everything finished with microscopic precision, as if done with a fairy pencil, or at the expense of the painter's eyes and reason. In reality a defect rather than an excellence, since the office of painting is to represent not what *is*, but what the eye sees, and the eye does not see everything; but a defect carried to such a pitch of perfection that one admires, and does not find fault. In this respect the most famous prodigies of patience were Dow, Mieris, Potter, and Van der Helst, but more or less all the Dutch painters.

But realism, which gives to Dutch art so original a stamp and such admirable qualities, is yet the root of its most serious defects. The artists, desirous only of representing material truths, gave to their figures no expression save that of their physical sentiments. Grief, love, enthusiasm, and the thousand delicate shades of feeling that have no name, or take a different one with the different causes that give rise to them, they express rarely, or not at all. For them the heart does not beat, the eyes do not weep, the lips do not quiver. One whole side of the human soul, the noblest and highest, is wanting in their pictures. More: in their faithful reproduction of everything, even the ugly, and especially the ugly, they end by exaggerating even that, making defects into deformities and portraits into caricatures; they calumniate the national type; they give a burlesque and graceless aspect to the human countenance. In order to have the proper background for such figures, they are constrained to choose trivial subjects: hence the great number of pictures representing beer-shops, and drinkers with grotesque, stupid faces, in absurd attitudes; ugly women and ridiculous old men; scenes in which one can almost hear the brutal laughter and the obscene words. Looking at these pictures, one would naturally conclude that Holland was inhabited by the ugliest and most ill-mannered people on the earth. We will not speak of greater and worse license. Steen, Potter, and Brouwer, the great Rembrandt himself, have all painted incidents that are scarcely to be mentioned to civilized ears, and certainly should not be looked at. But even setting aside these excesses, in the picture galleries of Holland there is to be found nothing that elevates the mind, or moves it to high and gentle thoughts. You admire, you enjoy, you laugh, you stand pensive for a moment before some canvas; but coming out, you feel that something is lacking to your pleasure, you experience a desire to look upon a handsome countenance, to read inspired verses, and sometimes you catch yourself murmuring, half unconsciously, "O Raphael!"

Finally, there are still two important excellences to be recorded of this school of painting: its variety, and its importance as the expression — the mirror, so to speak — of the country. If we except Rembrandt with his group of followers and imitators, almost all the other artists differ very much from one another; no other school presents so great a number of original masters. The realism of the Dutch painters is born of their common love of nature: but each one has shown in his work a kind of love peculiarly his own; each one has rendered a different impression which he has received from nature; and all, starting from the same point, which was the worship of material truth, have arrived at separate and distinct goals. Their realism, then, inciting them to disdain nothing as food for the pencil, has so acted that Dutch art succeeds in representing Holland more completely than has ever been accomplished by any other school in any other country. It has been truly said that should every other visible witness of the existence of Holland in the seventeenth century — her period of greatness — vanish from the earth, and the pictures remain, in them would be found preserved entire the city, the country, the ports, the ships, the markets, the shops, the costumes, the arms, the linen, the stuffs, the merchandise, the kitchen utensils, the food, the pleasures, the habits, the religious belief and superstitions, the qualities and effects of the people; and all this, which is great praise for literature, is no less praise for her sister art.

HENRI FRÉDÉRIC AMIEL

(1821–1881)

BY RICHARD BURTON

The French have long been writers of what they call 'Pensées,'—those detached thoughts or meditations which, for depth, illumination, and beauty, have a power of life, and come under the term «literature.» Their language lends itself to the expression of subjective ideas with lucidity, brilliance, charm. The French quality of mind allows that expression to be at once dignified and happily urbane. Sometimes these sayings take the form of the cynical epigrams of a La Rochefoucauld; are expanded into sententious aphorisms by a La Bruyère; or reveal more earnest and athletic souls, who pierce below the social surface froth to do battle with the demons of the intellect. To this class belong men like the seventeenth-century Pascal and the nineteenth-century Amiel.

The career of Henri Frédéric Amiel illustrates the dubiety of too hasty judgment of a man's place or power in the world. A Genevese by birth, of good parentage, early orphaned, well educated, much traveled, he was deemed, on his return in the springtime of his manhood to his native town as professor in the Academy of Geneva, to be a youth of great promise, destined to become distinguished. But the years slipped by, and his literary performance, consisting of desultory essays and several slight volumes of verse, was not enough to justify the prophecy. His life more and more became that of a bachelor recluse and valetudinarian. When he died, in 1881, at sixty years of age, after much suffering heroically borne, as pathetic entries in the last leaves of his Diary remain to show, there was a feeling that here was «one more faithful failure.» But the quiet, brooding teacher in the Swiss city which has at one time or another immured so many rare minds, had for years been jotting down his reflections in a private journal. It constitutes the story of his inner life, never told in his published writings. When a volume of the 'Journal Intime' appeared the year after his taking off, the world recognized in it not only an intellect of clarity and keenness, and a heart sensitive to the widest spiritual problems, but the revelation of a typical modern mood. The result was that Amiel, being dead, yet spoke to his generation, and his fame was quick and genuine. The apparent disadvantage point of Geneva proved, after all, the fittest abiding-place for the poet-philosopher. A second volume of extracts, two years later, found him in an assured place as a writer of 'Pensées.'

The 'Journal' of Amiel is symptomatic of his time,—perhaps one reason why it met with so sympathetic a response. It mirrors the intellectual doubtings, the spiritual yearnings and despairs of a strenuous and pure soul in a rationalistic atmosphere. In the day of scientific test and of skepticism, of the readjustment of conventions and the overthrow of sacrosanct traditions, one whose life is that of thought rather than of action finds much to perplex, to weary, and to sadden. So it was with the Swiss professor. He was always in the sanctum sanctorum of his spirit, striving to attain the truth; with Hamlet-like irresolution he poised in mind before the antinomies of the universe, alert to see around a subject, having the modern thinker's inability to be partisan. This way of thought is obviously unhealthy, or at least has in it something of the morbid. It implies the undue introspection which is well-nigh the disease of this century. There is in it the failure to lose one's life in objective incident and action, that one may find it again in regained balance of mind and bodily health. Amiel had the defect of his quality; but he is clearly to be separated from those shallow or exaggerated specimens of subjectivity illustrated by present-day women diarists, like Bashkirtseff and Kovalevsky. The Swiss poet-thinker had a vigor of thought and a broad culture; his aim was high, his desire pure, and his meditations were often touched with imaginative beauty. Again and again he flashes light into the darkest penetralia of the human soul. At times, too, there is in him a mystic fervor worthy of St. Augustine. If his dominant tone is melancholy, he is not to be called a pessimist. He believed in the Good at the central core of things. Hence is he a fascinating personality, a stimulative force. And these outpourings of an acute intellect, and a nature sensitive to the Ideal, are conveyed in a diction full of literary feeling and flavor. Subtlety, depth, tenderness, poetry, succeed each other; nor are the crisp, compressed sayings, the happy *mots* of the epigrammatist, entirely lacking. And pervading all is an impression of character.

Like Pascal, Amiel was a thinker interested above all in the soul of man. He was a psychologist, seeking to know the secret of the Whence, the Why, and the Whither. Like Joubert, whose journal resembled his own in its posthumous publication, his reflections will live by their weight, their quality, their beauty of form. Nor are these earlier writers of ‹Pensées› likely to have a more permanent place among the seed-sowers of thought. Amiel himself declared that «the pensée-writer is to the philosopher what the dilettante is to the artist. He plays with thought, and makes it produce a crowd of pretty things of detail; but he is more anxious about truths than truth, and what is essential in thought, its sequence, its unity, escapes him. . . . In a word, the pensée-writer deals with what is superficial and fragmentary.» While these words show the fine critical sense of the man, they do an injustice to his own work. Fragmentary it is, but neither superficial nor petty. One recognizes in reading his wonderfully suggestive pages that here is a rare personality, indeed,—albeit «sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.»

In 1889 an admirable English translation of Amiel by Mrs. Humphry Ward, the novelist, appeared in London. The introductory essay by Mrs. Ward is the best study of him in our language. The appended selections are taken from the Ward translation.

Richard Burton.

EXTRACTS FROM AMIEL'S JOURNAL

OCTOBER 1ST, 1849.—Yesterday, Sunday, I read through and made extracts from the Gospel of St. John. It confirmed me in my belief that about Jesus we must believe no one but Himself, and that what we have to do is to discover the true image of the Founder behind all the prismatic refractions through which it comes to us, and which alter it more or less. A ray of heavenly light traversing human life, the message of Christ has been broken into a thousand rainbow colors, and carried in a thousand directions. It is the historical task of Christianity to assume with every succeeding age a fresh metamorphosis, and to be forever spiritualizing more and more her understanding of the Christ and of salvation.

I am astounded at the incredible amount of Judaism and formalism which still exists nineteen centuries after the Redeemer's proclamation, «It is the letter which killeth»—after his protest against a dead symbolism. The new religion is so profound that it is not understood even now, and would seem a blasphemy to the greater number of Christians. The person of Christ is the centre of it. Redemption, eternal life, divinity, humanity, propitiation, incarnation, judgment, Satan, heaven and hell,—all these beliefs have been so materialized and coarsened that with a strange irony they present to us the spectacle of things having a profound meaning and yet carnally interpreted. Christian boldness and Christian liberty must be reconquered; it is the Church which is heretical, the Church whose sight is troubled and her heart timid. Whether we will or no, there is an esoteric doctrine—there is a relative revelation; each man enters into God so much as God enters into him; or, as Angelus, I think, said, « The eye by which I see God is the same eye by which He sees me.»

Duty has the virtue of making us feel the reality of a positive world while at the same time detaching us from it.

FEBRUARY 20TH, 1851.—I have almost finished these two volumes of [Joubert's] 'Pensées' and the greater part of the 'Correspondance.' This last has especially charmed me; it is remarkable for grace, delicacy, atticism, and precision. The chapters on metaphysics and philosophy are the most insignificant. All that has to do with large views, with the whole of things, is very little at Joubert's command: he has no philosophy of history, no speculative intuition. He is the thinker of detail, and his proper field is psychology and matters of taste. In this sphere of the subtleties and delicacies of imagination and feeling, within the circle of personal affections and preoccupations, of social and educational interests, he abounds in ingenuity and sagacity, in fine criticisms, in exquisite touches. It is like a bee going from flower to flower, a teasing, plundering, wayward zephyr, an æolian harp, a ray of furtive light stealing through the leaves. Taken as a whole, there is something impalpable and immaterial about him, which I will not venture to call effeminate, but which is scarcely manly. He wants bone and body: timid, dreamy, and clairvoyant, he hovers far above reality. He is rather a soul, a breath, than a man. It is the mind of a woman in the character of a child, so that we feel for him less admiration than tenderness and gratitude.

NOVEMBER 10TH, 1852.—How much have we not to learn from the Greeks, those immortal ancestors of ours! And how much better they solved their problem than we have solved ours! Their ideal man is not ours; but they understood infinitely better than we, how to reverence, cultivate, and ennoble the man whom they knew. In a thousand respects we are still barbarians beside them, as Béranger said to me with a sigh in 1843: barbarians in education, in eloquence, in public life, in poetry, in matters of art, etc. We must have millions of men in order to produce a few elect spirits: a thousand was enough in Greece. If the measure of a civilization is to be the number of perfected men that it produces, we are still far from this model people. The slaves are no longer below us, but they are among us. Barbarism is no longer at our frontiers: it lives side by side with us. We carry within us much greater things than they, but we ourselves are smaller. It is a strange result. Objective civilization produced great men while making no conscious effort toward such a result; subjective civilization produces a miserable and imperfect race, contrary to its mission and its earnest desire. The world grows more majestic, but man diminishes. Why is this?

We have too much barbarian blood in our veins, and we lack measure, harmony, and grace. Christianity, in breaking man up into outer and inner, the world into earth and heaven, hell and paradise, has decomposed the human unity, in order, it is true, to reconstruct it more profoundly and more truly. But Christianity has not yet digested this powerful leaven. She has not yet conquered the true humanity; she is still living under the antinomy of sin and grace, of here below and there above. She has not penetrated into the whole heart of Jesus. She is still in the *narthex* of penitence; she is not reconciled, and even the churches still wear the livery of service, and have none of the joy of the daughters of God, baptized of the Holy Spirit.

Then, again, there is our excessive division of labor; our bad and foolish education which does not develop the whole man; and the problem of poverty. We have abolished slavery, but without having solved the question of labor. In law, there are no more slaves — in fact, there are many. And while the majority of men are not free, the free man, in the true sense of the term, can neither be conceived nor realized. Here are enough causes for our inferiority.

NOVEMBER 12TH, 1852. — St. Martin's summer is still lingering, and the days all begin in mist. I ran for a quarter of an hour round the garden to get some warmth and suppleness. Nothing could be lovelier than the last rosebuds, or the delicate gaufred edges of the strawberry leaves embroidered with hoar-frost, while above them Arachne's delicate webs hung swaying in the green branches of the pines, — little ball-rooms for the fairies, carpeted with powdered pearls, and kept in place by a thousand dewy strands, hanging from above like the chains of a lamp, and supporting them from below like the anchors of a vessel. These little airy edifices had all the fantastic lightness of the elf-world, and all the vaporous freshness of dawn. They recalled to me the poetry of the North, wafting to me a breath from Caledonia or Iceland or Sweden, Frithjof and the Edda, Ossian and the Hebrides. All that world of cold and mist, of genius and of reverie, where warmth comes not from the sun but from the heart, where man is more noticeable than nature, — that chaste and vigorous world, in which will plays a greater part than sensation, and thought has more power than instinct, — in short, the whole romantic cycle of German and Northern poetry, awoke little by little in my memory and laid claim upon my sympathy. It is a poetry of bracing quality, and acts upon one like a moral tonic. Strange charm of imagination! A twig of pine-wood and a few spider-webs are enough to make countries, epochs, and nations live again before her.

JANUARY 6TH, 1853. — Self-government with tenderness, — here you have the condition of all authority over children. The child must discover in us no passion, no weakness of which he can make use; he must feel himself powerless to deceive or to trouble us; then he will recognize in us his natural superiors, and he will attach a special value to our kindness, because he will respect it. The child who can rouse in us anger, or impatience, or excitement, feels himself stronger than we, and a child respects strength only. The mother should consider herself as her child's sun, a changeless and ever radiant world, whither the small restless creature, quick at tears and laughter, light, fickle, passionate, full of storms, may come for fresh stores of light, warmth, and electricity, of calm and of courage. The mother represents goodness, providence, law; that is to say, the divinity, under that form of it which is accessible to childhood. If she is herself passionate, she will inculcate in her child a capricious and despotic God, or even several discordant gods. The religion of a child depends on what its mother and its father are, and not on what they say. The inner and unconscious ideal which guides their life is precisely what touches the child; their words, their remonstrances, their punishments, their bursts of feeling even, are for him merely thunder and comedy; what they worship — this it is which his instinct divines and reflects.

The child sees what we are, behind what we wish to be. Hence his reputation as a physiognomist. He extends his power as far as he can with each of us; he is the most subtle of diplomatists. Unconsciously he passes under the influence of each person about him, and reflects it while transforming it after his his own nature. He is a magnifying mirror. This is why the first principle of education is, Train yourself; and the first rule to follow, if you wish to possess yourself of a child's will, is, Master your own.

DECEMBER 17TH, 1856. — This evening was the second quartet concert. It stirred me much more than the first; the music chosen was loftier and stronger. It was the quartette in D minor of Mozart, and the quartette in C major of Beethoven, separated by a Spohr concerto. . .

The work of Mozart, penetrated as it is with mind and thought, represents a solved problem, a balance struck between aspiration and executive capacity, the sovereignty of a grace which is always mistress of itself, marvelous harmony and perfect unity. His quartette describes a day in one of those Attic souls who prefigure on earth the serenity of Elysium. . . .

In Beethoven's, on the other hand, a spirit of tragic irony paints for you the mad tumult of existence, as it dances forever above the threatening abyss of the infinite. No more unity, no more satisfaction, no more serenity! We are spectators of the eternal duel between the two great forces, that of the abyss which absorbs all finite things, and that of life which defends and asserts itself, expands, and enjoys. . . .

The soul of Beethoven was a tormented soul. The passion and the awe of the infinite seemed to toss it to and fro from heaven to hell. Hence its vastness. Which is the greater, Mozart or Beethoven? Idle question! The one is more perfect, the other more colossal. The first gives you the peace of perfect art, beauty at first sight. The second gives you sublimity, terror, pity, a beauty of second impression. The one gives that for which the other rouses a desire. Mozart has the classic purity of light and the blue ocean. Beethoven the romantic grandeur which belongs